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THE REVIVAL OF THE POET OF HOPE

by G. R. Elliott

A MORDANT pun appears at the beginning of Book Two of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, where Satan ascends the throne of hell,

> . . . and from despair
> Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
> Beyond thus high . . .

The obvious meaning of "beyond hope" is "beyond anticipation". Satan's present position is far higher than he could have foreseen when, not long before, he weltered on the flaming lake, looking round with eyes of "huge affliction and dismay" upon the region where "hope never comes that comes to all". But the phrase "beyond hope" may also mean beyond the reach of all true hope. Satan's very exaltation has established the hopelessness of his case. To become the political boss of a region where hope never comes is worse than to feel oneself utterly down and out in that atmosphere—at least from the standpoint of those who, like Satan, cannot get rid of the conviction that hell is an undesirable clime for permanent settlement.

This *double entendre* is entirely in Milton's manner. And even if I am forcing the deeper meaning of the passage beyond his conscious intention, I am certainly forcing it in the right direction. For as the story advances, Satan discovers that the higher he ascends in his chosen direction the lower are the deeps of despair that open beneath him. It is after his most ambitious flight that he cries, "Which way I fly is hell!". His kind of aspiration is a "proud untaught imagination" that engenders with itself to produce more of the same. It maintains itself only by ever aspiring "beyond thus high". It rises from despairing apathy only through a species of exultation that flies away from all true hope. It never attains a firm human level. Indeed, though it woos mankind with angelic allurements, it is secretly hostile to humanity. It allies itself inevitably with Chaos, as Milton powerfully displays towards the end of Book Two. Here the kingly elevation of Satan is echoed ironically when the poet exclaims, "behold the Throne of Chaos!". And here, in a passage that reads like a sequel of the one quoted at the beginning, Satan

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With fresh alacritie and force renew'd
Springs upward like a Pyramid of fire
Into the wilde expanse . . .

These lines may have been at work in the imagination of Shelley when he wrote his *Skylark*:

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire . . .

Here the theme is etherealized, the "Pyramid" becomes a "cloud", and the rhythmic curve is shortened. Such sublimation of Renaissance motifs is characteristic of the Romantic poets. Indeed, as time goes on, the Romantic Movement is bound to lose its mien of extraordinary independence and to appear, like the Neo-Classicism that preceded it, an aftermath of the Renaissance. Romanticism is really a quick isolation, a lyric narrowing, a gleaming vaporescence of a certain quality of emotion carried over from the seventeenth century. Milton's Satan, extracted from his context, became one of the chief founders of the Romantic school. In Milton's writings Satan is admired and devastatingly criticized. The Romantics, ignoring the criticism, heightened the admiration to lyric enthusiasm. Satan's leading ideas, which seemed to Milton vigorous but terribly naïve, seemed to the Romantics unconventional but sublime.

And really the chief representative of the Satanic spirit in English poetry is not Byron but Shelley. It was only a superficial criticism, proceeding from Romanticism itself, that made Byron the chief of the "Satanic School". For Satan was not mainly, what Byron was superficially, a gloomy Giaour. Like Shelley he was an angelic rebel, full of humanitarian sophistry, blind to the deepest laws of spiritual nature, naïve in his conception of heaven and in his persistent devotion to that conception. His lyric fervors and despondencies reappear, etherealized, in Shelley's poetry. Here they have a "skyey speed" and shrill violin loveliness quite beyond the massive Milton. This was Shelley's achievement as a post-Renaissance poet. He sublimated the "Pyramid" of dark flame to a singing "cloud of fire". The essential quality of his aspiration, however, is that of Milton's Satan—a "proud untaught imagination" thriving in Chaos and devoid of firm humanity; a hopeless kind of hope that couples with itself and creates "from its own wreck the thing it contemplates"; a hope (again in Shelley's own words) "too like despair".

Romanticism, though formally repudiated and certainly decadent, still continues under new disguises to dominate the modern imagination. Witness the extraordinary imbroglio of unsound hopes and morbid despairs in twentieth-century literature. Witness the fact that Shelley, whether approved or disapproved, still wears the title of "*the* poet of hope". Writers who think they have left his thought behind, think like him when they think hopefully. Those who reject his kind of hope identify it more or less with the hope of humanity, believing themselves completely disillusioned. But the identification of romantic hope with human hope is the worst of delusions. Romantic hope, no doubt as old as mankind, is properly nothing but poetic relaxation. If taken more seriously it becomes subversive of true human hope and brings on despair. This fact was clear to Milton. It is always clear to the greatest poets and to minor poets who are veracious. But Shelley was neither very great, nor minor, nor veracious. He was not veracious enough to experience the true disillusion that prepares the way for true hope. Events forced him to recognize at times his own tendency to embrace, like Ixion, "a cloud instead of a Juno". But he never saw that his hope at its very core was confused and delusive, producing centaurs for society, and chaining poetry to Ixion's wheel that goes round and round in the air.

However, there is hope that the wheel may be stopped, the vicious circle broken; that romance, disengaged from Romanticism, may regain its old empery of pure make-believe;

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and that firm human hope, disentangled from romance, may regain its proper sway in our hearts and in our literature. When that time comes, Shelley will be generally recognized as a very bad poet of hope, and a very good poet indeed of cloud-holiday, of ethereal relaxation. And Milton will be seen for what he is, *the* poet of hope—the greatest poet of right human hope in English and, perhaps, in all secular literature.

The way for this happy consummation is now being prepared by three movements in the realm of critical scholarship: a careful re-study of Milton, particularly in America; a revival of humanistic doctrine in America and France; and a renewal of religious thinking, at once catholic and modern, in England. These three movements are potential allies. They will become more effectual as they become more aware of each other. So far, each has proceeded in comparative isolation from the other two, and each has suffered thereby. For instance the Milton scholars, in their efforts to free the poet from the errors of previous criticism and to establish him as an imaginative thinker of great present importance, have been hampered by their unfamiliarity with the best religious and humanistic thought of the present time. Such is the case with a new book by Mr. Tillyard, lecturer in English literature in Cambridge University.*

This volume is important and interesting. It is the most comprehensive single work on Milton so far produced by the new scholarship and the one most likely to interest the general reader. Now and then the text is clogged with minor details that ought to be relegated to appendices, whereas such major favorites as *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* are dismissed in a dozen lines. But Mr. Tillyard's faults of proportion are compensated by his fine and continual insight into Milton's art, in the prose and the Latin verse as well as the English poems. He has a keen sense for poetic tone and architecture. The following, for instance, is of special interest to lovers of the youthful "Nativity Ode" who have felt in it a commanding but almost inexplicable unity of tone underneath its artificial conceits and wide variations of style: "The truth is that the conceits cannot be spared from the Ode, for it is partly through them that is created the quality that gives it its unique charm: the clean exuberance of the best primitive art. A fifteenth-century Italian picture of the Nativity gives the simplest comparison. Here the absurdities—the rickety shelter, the far from new-born physique of the child, the cows peering with imbecile faces over a broken wall—unite with the simple brilliant colouring to create a most captivating sense of youthfulness and simplicity. The essence of the poem is not stateliness excusing conceit, but homeliness, quaintness, tenderness, extravagance, and sublimity, harmonized by a pervading youthful candour and ordered by a commanding architectonic grasp".

Mr. Tillyard also succeeds in putting into words the intense but elusive pattern of *Lycidas*. And he illuminates very considerably the major poems. *Paradise Lost*, according to the still prevalent notion fostered by Romanticism, is a broken pattern, a stylistic *tour-de-force* holding together, artificially, several discordant themes. Mr. Tillyard, after sensing in *Paradise Lost* a deep organic unity like that of *Lycidas*, shows that the poem is woven throughout upon the single theme announced by its title and opening lines, the Fall of Man—that is, the original and originative insubordination of man's lower nature, with results for good as well as for evil. Incidentally Mr. Tillyard shows how the Garden of Eden, presented in Book Four as "a colony of heaven", is not allowed to become "real Earth" till Book Nine; how this "gradual familiarizing of Paradise" belongs to the essential design of the poem; and how this is true also of the great preludes to Books One, Three, Seven, and Nine, which have so far been treated mainly as excrescences. He is at his best, however, in his treatment of *Para-*

* *Milton*, by E. W. M. Tillyard (Dial Press, $5.00).

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dise Regained, that "unearthly dialogue between Reason on the one hand and Passion in very subtle and sophisticated form on the other, in the enchanted wilderness. . . . The dim wilderness stands for the loneliness of the individual mind, cut off from the experiences of every day and from the support of its fellows in its struggle for self-mastery, while the dreamlike and artificial brilliance of the spectacles that tempt the mind expresses at once the glamour of worldly success and its essential insubstantiality". I hope his words will do much to rescue this superb poem from the neglect and misunderstanding that have dogged it. He claims that, so far from being a tired continuation of *Paradise Lost*, it is profounder in energy and originality than its more popular successor, *Samson Agonistes*.

Paradise Regained is in fact the centerpiece of the general design that Milton carried through his major poems—the design of a three-fold exhibition (epic, allegorical, dramatic) of man's higher reason and faith encountering, surmounting, and controlling the life of passion and action. Such a summary, of course, is too abstract and conscious. The design unfolded in Milton's chief poems was a concrete poetic purpose that grew up naturally from his whole life as a man. His art and thought were extraordinarily integral with his personality. And the main achievement of the new scholarship has been to demonstrate this fact by a careful and minute investigation of Milton from the psychological-biographic standpoint. In this field the chief worker, at once the most originative and the most reliable, is professor J. H. Hanford of Western Reserve University.* Mr. Tillyard in the best biographic passages of his book generally agrees with Mr. Hanford. And both take part with other recent writers in undermining the Romantic belief that Milton was divided against himself: that the prose of his middle period cut across the right line of his development as poet; that his Puritanism stultified his passion; and that his delight in Satan conflicted hopelessly with his formal doctrines. Mr. Tillyard is particularly happy in bringing out the beauty and power of Milton's prose while showing how his ideas were gradually developed, through this medium, in preparation for his major poems. His ideas grew from the Renaissance as a whole, not from Puritanism. And the new biographers have realized that from beginning to end he was a man of profound passion. He showed in a very eminent degree that capacity which a man of strong and *sustained* passion must have, and which the Romanticist lacks and misinterprets—the capacity for constantly raising his emotion from lower to higher levels, conserving and renewing its power by thoroughly converting its very quality.

This is why the poetic forces of Milton, unlike those of the typical Romantic, were not demobilized by life and could be fully deployed only in his later years. The same consideration explains his handling of Satan. The French scholar M. Saurat says: "Milton had Satan in him and wanted to drive him out. He had felt passion, pride, and sensuality. The deep pleasure he takes in his creation of Satan is the joy of liberating, purging himself of the evil in himself, by concentrating it, outside himself, in a work of art. . . . He wanted not to suppress but to master his passion. . . . Milton treats Satan as a personal enemy".* The last sentence is too picturesquely personal; but it serves to overbalance the Romantic opinion that Milton treats Satan, subconsciously, as a personal friend. M. Saurat also sees that "there was deeply rooted in Milton a tendency to look upon himself, not as an exception in the Romantic manner, but as a normal representative of human nature; his high opinion of himself is also a high opinion of man". In short, the new biography has opened up the breadth and unity of personal

* The titles of his writings are included in the bibliography given in his *Milton Handbook* (F. S. Crofts. 1926).

* *Milton, Man and Thinker*, by Denis Saurat (Dial Press. 1925).

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life that underlies the pattern of Milton's chief poems.

In respect of Milton's leading ideas, however, these scholars are far from adequate. And hence their efforts to see him steadily and whole are suggestive and preparatory rather than successful. M. Saurat and Mr. Tillyard are guilty of some basic confusions and contradictions. In particular, they and others have missed the real idea of Milton's hope, his hope as a great religious humanist. And this hope, more than any other single quality, is the unifying theme of all his life and work. To miss it is to miss the inner shrine of Milton's thought and poetry. Generally speaking we may say that there has taken place a remarkable revival of The Poet of Hope—but so far without his hope.

"On the other hand," cries a certain type of reader, "I see no hope in labelling Milton a 'religious humanist'!" Well, labels are very common at the present time—together with an avowed dislike of labels. In the sense of mental categories, labels are always present in criticism whether or not they are put into words. For example, the upshot of M. Saurat's book is to push Milton silently into the category of modern Stoic. In Milton's time, says the author, "the idea that everything is only a modification of one universal substance was gaining ground in European thought, preparing for an age of precise scientific investigation of natural phenomena". Very true. But Milton himself was too good a humanist to be deeply affected by this idea. It has become a central tenet of modern Stoicism and has so much affected M. Saurat as to injure fatally his conception of Milton. It leads him to declare that "Milton's God is properly speaking identical with the Absolute of nineteenth-century philosophy". In relation to this Absolute, the idea of divine Grace, which is the very keystone of the arch of Milton's thought, becomes meaningless. Therefore M. Saurat discounts Milton's belief in Grace and makes him out a relentless devotee of all-sufficing reason—thus turning his hero upside down. M. Saurat tries to make Milton supremely alive for the present day by the simple process of killing what was supremely alive for Milton. He notes, to be sure, that "it was not Catholic dogma or ideas that shocked Milton but the tyranny he associated with the Church of Rome". But he does not see that catholic religious ideas form one of the two main pillars of Milton's thought, the other being Platonic humanism. It seems better, then, to put Milton plainly into the category that is least inadequate for him, that of religious humanist, than to label him, in silent and unacknowledged confusion, as a modern Stoic.

Mr. Tillyard, though much impressed by M. Saurat and imperceptive of his radical error, is wary of the French scholar's hard rationalism. He wishes to be flexible and to see all sides of Milton's mind. In pursuance of this aim he has read a vast amount of Milton criticism, even that produced in America. He remarks in his preface that "since the War, Americans have contributed more to the elucidation of Milton than have the critics of any other country, even if the average proportion of chaff to grain in their criticism makes its purchase a little expensive". This observation, taken by itself, is fair enough. But unfortunately Mr. Tillyard goes on to confess "a large general indebtedness" to the critical writings of his colleague, Mr. I. A. Richards, without showing any awareness that they contain any chaff at all. Some readers, while appreciating the industrious cleverness of the psychological intricacies of Mr. Richards, find it rather hard to justify any one of the three terms in the title of his *magnum opus*, the *Principles of Literary Criticism*. At any rate his principles are extremely remote from Milton's. Such is the case also with the literary principles of Mr. T. S. Eliot. Mr. Tillyard's final chapter is largely devoted to discussing and partly refuting a certain theory advanced by Mr. Eliot, to the effect that Milton was largely responsible for "a dissociation of sensibility

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from which we have never recovered". Now this theory, if closely examined, appears to be half vague, half wrong, and not entirely important. But Mr. Tillyard declares it is "perhaps the most suggestive and influential that has recently been propounded in the sphere of English literary history". Alas, then, for English literary history—or, more exactly speaking, for British literary criticism. The truth is that at the present moment British literary criticism (as distinguished from religious criticism), though often delightful in warmth and brilliance of detail, is remarkably lacking in depth, newness, and clarity of principle. It does not understand, though it thinks it understands, the real points at issue between Romanticism and humanism. One result of this situation is that the principle of hope in Milton is sorely misunderstood by Mr. Tillyard. In order to understand it, he would need to close his Shelley, Saurat, Richards, and Eliot, as Carlyle closed his Byron, and open the scriptures of religion and humanism.

However, Mr. Tillyard has the air of not caring for labels, and would no doubt smile at the antique-looking notion of calling Milton a religious humanist. Instead, he labels him, though not in so many words, a romantic hoper. Milton as a thinker, according to Mr. Tillyard, was very much of a Romantic; hence "there are signs that recent opinion is setting against him as well as against the avowed romantic school of the nineteenth century". But the fact is that "recent opinion" —that is, current literary criticism in England—is largely an unavowed continuation of "the avowed romantic school", and is therefore averse to Milton. It obeys the familiar Romantic tradition of praising him in particular aspects while ignoring, rejecting, or obscuring his leading ideas. For Milton is the chief modern imaginative foe, and a very awful foe indeed, of Romanticism. The name, of course, was unknown to him, but the main tendencies of the movement were beginning in his time, and he could feel them in himself. With prophetic vision he saw these tendencies in their most extreme and destructive form. And with prophetic fury he tried to gather them together, in a phalanx of rebel angels, and to hurl them

> With hideous ruine and combustion down
> To bottamless perdition, there to dwell
> In Adamantine Chains and penal Fire,
> Who durst defie th' Omnipotent to arms.

In good sooth we come here upon Milton's deficiency. He was too harsh to the free play of our lower imagination—the rebellious, idyllic, naturalistic, cynical, and in the end embittered imagination. From boyhood Milton was awkward at play. It is not to him but to the boyish Shelley that we must go when we yearn for ethereal relaxation. The Romantics heedlessly revived the earthly paradise. But Milton (as I have said elsewhere) pushed it too ruthlessly into the utmost suburbs of poetry. For he saw that this Garden of Eden when taken too seriously is bound to become in the end, what in fact it has become today, "The haunt of Seales and Orcs and Seamews' clang". So far from being a romantic hoper, Milton was too much preoccupied with the fact that romantic hope is eventually hopeless.

But Mr. Tillyard says: "his belief in a qualified perfectibility, in virtue of action, was in full accord with the temper of the Romantics". Accordingly Milton's view "has obvious analogies with such belief in human progress as has survived the recent world upheaval". And his faith in mankind, like that of the Romantics, was accustomed to fluctuate "from extravagant hope to almost total despair". This is the theory that leads and misleads Mr. Tillyard in dealing with the theme of hope in Milton's successive writings. He thinks that Milton as a young man at the outbreak of the Civil War "abandoned his whole mind", like Shelley, to the expectation of a "paradise on earth". He quotes from Milton's pamphlets some noble passages in which the poet, humbly praying for the help of God, exhorts his nation not to

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fall short of its great opportunity. Mr. Tillyard actually quotes such passages—and then, blinded by his theory, observes: "Such lyrical fervour for a changed world joined with a belief in its immediate possibility can be matched in English literature by Shelley alone". He proceeds in defiance of his own good taste to align with Milton's moral and religious periods some ethereal passages from that lovely playboy vision, Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*. It follows of course that the Restoration of Charles the Second must almost inevitably have been "the greatest shock Milton received during his life". There happens to be no biographic evidence to this effect. But Mr. Tillyard, though elsewhere he protests against the tendency of recent scholars to read too much biography into Milton's poems, finds what he wants in *Paradise Lost*. In the first half of the poem, composed under the spell of the Commonwealth, he finds a reforming and hopeful energy; in the second half, "fundamental pessimism" in regard to the welfare of mankind. In short, Milton is here represented as traversing the familiar orbit of romantic hope and romantic despair. To be sure, this theory is only one feature of Mr. Tillyard's book, and is constantly interrupted by his native good sense. The net result, however, is a fatal confusion in regard to the main theme of Milton's life and work.

Anyone may trace that theme for himself in the delightful volume from which the verse-quotations in this paper are taken, Professor Patterson's new edition of Milton.* This book provides "the happily ever-increasing number of Milton readers throughout the country" (so the editor puts it) with "a one-volume text of Milton's poetry and his most important prose". The text of the poems "is that of the original editions except in places where Milton himself revised the reading in the second editions". Here, then, the reader may follow the poet's own words of hope. And he may take for his clue a certain true perception in Mr. Tillyard's book which the author himself, in his aversion to religious humanism, fails to develop: "Milton always felt within himself, a standard, and a peculiarly exacting standard, of conduct which he believed to come from outside him and which he had to obey. Some readers will like to call it God, others some other name. But of Milton's belief in it—and he himself preferred to call it God—there can be no doubt".

Certainly that supernal "standard" is for Milton something more than the conventional Christian deity. But it is also something more than a mere moral criterion. It is in fact a living and guiding presence in which divine law and divine personality are identical or, at least, are experienced as two sides of a single being. This being, though closely present to man and nature, is sharply distinguished from them by its ineffable glory—not a mere emotional luminescence, as often in Romantic mysticism, but the glory of a supreme creative pattern steadily imposed upon man by a will akin to his own. That glory, that will or being, is variously worshipped in Milton's writings from the "Nativity Ode", the "Sonnet at the Age of Twenty-Three", *Comus,* and *Lycidas* down to the closing words of *Samson Agonistes*. It assumes in *Paradise Lost* the figure of the Son of God. Always it is the very heart of Milton's hope—the hope that goes through *Paradise Lost* from beginning to end, giving the poem that organic unity which Mr. Tillyard approaches so warmly and, in the upshot, misses so radically.

In this respect his book lends aid and comfort to the dissociational or disruptive view of Milton, which he elsewhere opposes, and which reappears vividly in the latest book of Professor Grierson.* This excellent scholar and writer has that susceptibility to quick poetic effects which it has been the service

* *The Works of Milton*, edited by Frank Allen Patterson (F. S. Crofts. $5.00. *Poems*, alone, $2.50).

* *Cross Currents of English Literature of the Seventeenth Century*, by H. J. C. Grierson (London, Chatto & Windus. 1929).

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of the Romantic Movement to develop in many English scholars. But he is not very perceptive of those slower and larger effects achieved by poets of the calibre of Spenser and Milton through the intellectual imagination. He first splits Spenser and then Milton in two, putting their philosophy on the far side of a poetic fence and their temperaments on the hither side. At his most unfortunate moment he exclaims in regard to *Paradise Lost*, "Is there any thought which seems to come so directly from the heart of the story and of the poet as this, that a man must learn to keep his wife in her proper place, which is the moral of *Samson Agonistes?*". Well, I think that when a reader meditates on those two great poems as wholes (keeping Milton's first wife "in her proper place" as much as they do) he finds emerging "from the heart of the story and of the poet" a certain great thought passed over by Professor Grierson, the Miltonic idea of hope. It is in this very idea, moreover, that the imaginative and intellectual aspects of Milton are mainly fused, notably in *Paradise Lost*.

Mr. Tillyard rightly stresses the "unconscious meaning" underneath the conscious meaning of *Paradise Lost*, but without perceiving its main drift. In the later books of the poem Milton's imagination brings together, unconsciously, the Christian doctrine of "the elect" and the humanist doctrine of "the saving-remnant". Renaissance philosophy, still hampered by the bonds of literal Latin theology, was not able to establish in universal terms the affinity of these two doctrines. Properly they are two aspects of a single old conviction: that salvation comes to mankind through the living example and redeeming power of its noblest leaders. This is the conviction on which the major poems of Milton are built. "He loses faith in everything," says Mr. Tillyard, "except what he called God and what some men might call himself." Not so. He dismisses, and I confess too harshly, those subordinate hopes which most men love to cultivate. He is not interested in the modern extension of emotional sympathies, the advance of science, the hope of social progress. At times he is even inclined to slur, in his later years, the value of such wide intellectual culture as he himself had attained. Worst of all he rejects the catholic symbols and exercises of religion (as distinguished from catholic doctrines) by which the human imagination is taught to bow, in hope, before the gods and godlike men. But at the same time, he throws the whole force of his great mind and imagination into that faith and that hope without which all our aspirations turn in the end to dust and ashes: faith in the supreme reality of the pattern of life revealed to mankind through the lives of the noblest men; hope in the eventual redeeming power of the life of the few for the lives of the many. In *Paradise Lost* this hope is gradually unfolded. At first it is a small clear ray appearing fitfully in regions of emotional glooms and delights, of romantic flames and flowers. Then those regions, where hope either turns to despair, as when Satan ascends his throne in hell, or turns to romance, as when Eve raises her hand for the apple—those regions retire more and more to form a multicolored background for the lamp of true hope. It shines in the foreground of the second half of the poem. It illuminates the rather drab narratives of the two closing books with a strong, subdued cheerfulness. It is this eventual tone of *Paradise Lost*, this particular quality of cheerfulness, that finally opens for the reader the deeper and less conscious meaning of the poem and prepares him to understand the two poems that follow. It is the right tone of a mind that has become disillusioned in regard to the world without, however, rejecting the world. It is the right tenor of a hope that, moving in a clear mid-region between romantic aspirations and despairs, is at once humane and religious.

Milton's Christianity, much admired by his earlier critics, has been heavily discounted by

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his later critics, including Professor Grierson and Mr. Tillyard, on the ground that his pride, for good or for ill, is incompatible with Christian humility. But I think that these critics have too much assimilated Christian humility to democratic sympathy and modesty, or self-deprecation. In these qualities Milton is plainly deficient. And it is true on the other hand that his human pride is at variance with the conventional doctrine of the Passion and Atonement of Christ. In this regard he must always be offensive to Christians who worship Christ on merely traditional grounds and to Romantics who worship Him, or like to see Him worshipped, on esthetic and sentimental grounds. Milton as humanist is very critical of what may be termed emotional vicariousness. He resents the Christian tendency to asperse the moral intellect and to limit the divine redemptive power to Christ. With humane irony, he represents Christ in *Paradise Regained*, not at all as a magical mediator lifting the burden of responsibility from men, but as a great moral philosopher unfolding human duty; while reserving the rôle of suffering saviour for the hero of *Samson Agonistes* who dies, not of vicarious predestination, but in the course of fulfilling a high duty gradually and naturally revealed to him. And these two rôles, the sage in retirement and the saint in action (combined in the figure of Abdiel in *Paradise Lost*) are constantly present to Milton's imagination as two complementary aspects of human nature at its highest. His constant conviction is that redemptive power is operative wherever men do their duty in thought and deed, and that the best any man can do for humanity is to develop his own character, and to find his own proper happiness or peace, in the alternating realms of reflection and action. His hope is that the many may be redeemed by the few —our many cheap desires and doings by our few noble efforts, our swarming populace by the few men who follow "Justice and Temperance, Truth and Faith . . . against allurement, custom, and a World offended".

But this hope, though far from being merely Christian, has certainly for Milton its apex in Christianity. He steadily refuses to allow religious creeds, any more than romantic yearnings, to cloud the issue of human and individual responsibility. He keeps the human will and reason always in the foreground. But he believes that when these are really redemptive, they are supernatural as well as natural, divine as well as human. He did not nurse the hope, Mr. Tillyard to the contrary, "that mankind would improve out of its own resources", without the aid of divine Grace; though he did hold the Catholic doctrine, with which Mr. Tillyard shows no familiarity, that redeeming Grace is identified in its action with the highest level of the human will. And if his verses on the conventional Atonement are "pallid", his treatment of the divine redeeming power at work in mankind, preëminently through Christ, is warm with devotion, gratitude, and humility. Moreover, when his powers as thinker and writer were reaching their full height, his hope was at the same time centering itself more and more in Christ. He found in Christ an unique foundation for faith in the Grace and eventual justice of God towards men, and for the hope that, in some way beyond the formulative capacity of human reason, the human many may find their proper happiness through the agency of the human few. I think that Mr. Tillyard, if his fine poetic discernment were not here thwarted by false doctrine, could not miss the sheer poetic lift and verve of many passages on the theme of divine redemption in *Paradise Lost*. For instance, the passage in Book Three beginning, "Then with the multitude of my Redeemed". Or the one near the close of Book Twelve which, after displaying "greatly in peace of thought" the right way of living in the world and the hope of "the Gate of Life", concludes:

> Taught this by his example whom I now
> Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest.

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THE FUTURE OF THE NOVEL

by V. Sackville-West

WHATEVER else one may say about novels, there are two statements which are not likely to be disputed. One is that many people write them, and the other is that many people read them. We may presume that for the moment the readers are numerically in excess of the writers, though the army of writers seems to be doing its best to catch up. To my mind the wish to write a novel is far more comprehensible than the wish to read one; for if the saying be true that fiction provides a means of escape from the weariness of life, then how much more thorough and prolonged an escape does it provide for the writer who spends months over his work, living inside his characters as he can never live inside even his most intimate friends, than for the reader who in a couple of hours has galloped from Chapter I to Chapter XXXIII! But this is by the way. The fact remains that supply and demand both appear to be inexhaustible.

So every publishing season brings its crop of masterpieces. I pick some ejaculations at random from the publishers' announcements in a weekly paper, and only regret that space should forbid their reproduction in the variety of type which originally proclaimed them. One book screams against another, till the literary page reminds one of nothing so much as a banging of tin trays: "in immense demand"; "ovation accorded"; "hauntingly lovely"; "extraordinarily brilliant"; "the greatest novel of the year" (there are several of these); and quotations from well-known reviewers, adjectival mostly, accompany the book like an escort with fluttering banners. Bewildered, harried, deafened, we are forced to the conclusion that we must be living in the greatest age of literature the world has ever seen.

And the truth is that in fiction the standard is astonishingly high. One could reel off without a moment's hesitation the names of at least thirty living novelists whose work is thoroughly competent, decent, sincere, ingenious, readable. That is the heartbreaking thing about it. The standard is as level as the top of a newly-trimmed hedge.

I see signs that this perfection of competence is beginning to pall upon the more intelligent reading public. The thing is well done, certainly; but it is being done over and over and over again. Repetition is death; just as one can no longer endure a poem which one meets with in every anthology or as one is glutted by the cadences of Swinburne. The methods of ordinary fiction have become so familiar that they can no longer make any impact on the imagination; the tool, though so beautifully polished, has lost its cutting edge. Fiction has become a conjuring trick of which we have learnt the secret.

There are signs, too, of the same restlessness among some of the novelists themselves. The old formulas are becoming intolerable. Circumstantial detail—once so exciting a discovery—frets us now, and irritates. We are

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bored by the aspidistra on the lodging-house window-sill, and by the pattern on the lace curtains shutting out the sun. Realism itself has turned into a schoolboy's irreverent gesture rather apprehensively made under the nose of the censor. Even in the hands of Mr. Joyce we suspect it of a tinge of juvenile defiance. Yet there ought to be life enough left for the novel. Every phase of human experience is its province. What more can it ask, the wretched, worrying thing?

What it appears to be asking for is greater emancipation. This at first sight may seem an unreasonable and even paradoxical demand. Of all forms of literature, what is freer, looser, more elastic than the novel? But in the words "forms of literature" we come, I think, to the basic trouble of the really serious novelist: fiction is all too closely bound up with life. It is too fatally condemned to the presentation of situations, emotions and characters which find their counterpart in our everyday experience. It reproduces life, but seldom transcends it. The average reader, indeed, does not demand that fiction should transcend life; he demands solely that it should be "true to life", and if a character reminds him of his Aunt Emily or of poor old Tom he will slap his thigh and tell his friends that he has just been reading a jolly good novel. The question of content is far more important, to his mind, than any literary or esthetic appreciation; and even for the most discerning reader it is very difficult to set aside the question of content in a novel entirely. It is possible even that the writer himself may unconsciously be hampered by this Siamese-twin relationship between life and fiction. It is not surprising therefore to find a tendency among certain of the better novelists (I use a somewhat arbitrary expression) to emancipate fiction from this factual bondage and lift it nearer to the plane where, like poetry or music, it may claim the right to be considered not for its "truth" or for its likeness to life, but as a manifestation of creative art.

It is all very well for Mrs. Woolf to say that we must at all costs hold on to the skirts of Mrs. Brown. Mrs. Woolf herself does no such thing. She will chase a butterfly or look out of the window at a starling on the lawn, but Mrs. Brown herself (for all her clean little boots and mended gloves) will remain but a shell resounding with thoughts and with an imagery conceivable only by her creator. Mrs. Woolf pretends to be interested in Mrs. Brown, but she is not really interested; she is interested only in the ideas that Mrs. Brown starts up in her. Mrs. Brown (if ever Mrs. Woolf writes a novel about her) will find herself twisted into an unrecognizable repository—if, indeed, she is not completely forgotten before she has struggled halfway deep into the book. She will not be "true to life". The reader who has fetched her from the library will not be reminded of his Aunt Emily. Disconcerted, his conventions upset, he will find his judgment called upon for an esthetic, not a practical, appraisement, as though he were reading poetry—which, of course, he never does. These modern novels! These ladies turned into foxes, these high winds blowing in Jamaica! No, he says, give me Dickens (forgetting that the best of Dickens rests upon caricature, horror, and exaggeration, not upon true-to-life-ness); give me the Forsytes—grand old man, Soames, damned attractive woman, Irene. Give me *The Good Companions*. And we do; we give him a hundred and fifteen thousand copies of it.

So I imagine that a cleavage may come about in the world of fiction, one half of it striving away from that stale formula of "truth"—ennobled and surpassed on its own ground only by Tolstoy, Balzac, Flaubert, and a few others—the other half sticking resolutely, and profitably, to "the proper function of fiction", which is the delineation of life as we know it. No comment or preference is implied in this prophecy. And indeed it is a large, rich subject, of which I have touched only the extreme edge.

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THE WRITERS OF CALIFORNIA

by Carey McWilliams

CALIFORNIA has always boasted of a distinguished literary tradition. It is largely for this reason that one must be familiar with the main tendencies of the tradition before approaching the writers of the present generation. This is particularly true when, as now, contemporary writing is in a period of transition.

The culture of the Spanish period was self-contained. It found expression in the early diaries and journals out of which such antiquarians as Mr. Phil Townsend Hanna are creating today a body of folk-lore. But the Spanish period, however idyllic and charming, was irrevocably shattered by the discovery of gold. As Josiah Royce wrote: "The gold excitement determined the entire future of California". It is interesting to speculate as to precisely what type of culture might have been evolved had the Spanish régime remained unmolested for another half century. It never became fully articulate. But judging from its architecture, its handicraft, and mode of life, Spanish California held high promise for the future.

The period of the gold excitement, which followed on the close of the Spanish period, is miraculously preserved in Bayard Taylor's *Eldorado*. The fifties in California saw the publication of such journals as *Alta California* and *The Golden Era*. It was the period of Bret Harte, Ina Coolbrith, Dan DeQuille, Mark Twain, James Bowman, Sam Davis, Stephen Masset, Joe Goodman, Charles Warren Stoddard and Ambrose Bierce. The spirit of this early writing was that of hilarious and irresponsible humor. Journals flourished and reputations were created overnight, but by 1870 the scene had changed and the first tide of western expression had passed into history. With the exception of Harte's stories, the verse of Ina Coolbrith and Joaquin Miller, and a few stories by Ambrose Bierce, little significant work was done during this period. The excitement in which the movement was generated is reflected in the work of its more significant writers. They never settled down to live in California. Residence was a transitory affair; the state was looted for the picturesque and humorous. Today the deserted "diggin's" in Placer County are not more forlorn than the record left of their passing.

The intermediate period was even less fruitful. *The Argonaut, The Wasp* and other magazines were interesting but ineffectual and obliquely irrelevant. It was a period marked by high pretence and incongruous traditions. Writers did not take stock of their times, but, like Philip Shirley, the author of that absurdly amusing novel of San Francisco, *On the Verge,* flirted coyly with the grand manner. The period was hopelessly bombastic if one may except the poisonous sarcasm of Ambrose Bierce.

With the turn in the century came a third period. It revolved around the colony which Mary Austin founded at Carmel in 1905.

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George Sterling, James Hopper, Henry Milner Rideout, John Fleming Wilson, Michael Williams, Frederic R. Bechdolt, Jesse Lynch Williams, Harvey Wickham, and others, contributed to the fame of Carmel. Mrs. Austin in *The Land of Little Rain* and *The Flock* wrote two western classics. Gertrude Atherton in *Rezánov* and *The Splendid Idle Forties* left records which could only have been improved had they been written directly in the historical manner. But much of the writing of this period lacked pertinency. It is interesting to find Park Barnitz publishing a volume of verse in San Francisco containing this echo of Ernest Dowson and the nineties:

"I am a little weary of the Persian
Girl that I lov'd; I am quite tired of love;
And I am weary of
The smoking censers, and the sweet diversion
Of stroking Leila's jasmine-scented hair,
I thought so fair."

Aside from a few novels of San Francisco, such as *The Day of Souls* by Charles Tenney Jackson, *In the Heartline* by Gelett Burgess and *The Swing of the Pendulum* by Adrienne Spadoni, most of the writing from 1900 to 1918 was as much adrift as the poetry of Barnitz.

The period lacked sturdiness. Individual pieces, such as Sterling's "Autumn in Carmel", are memorable, but one is frequently exasperated with Mrs. Atherton for writing fustian, with Jack London because of his nonsensical and emotional vaporizing, with Frank Norris for rushing through his novels lost in a maelstrom of narrative cross-currents. The newer writers of the Coast are more convincing if only for the reasons that they are more familiar with their material and more humble in spirit, and this despite the dictum of Mr. Howard Mumford Jones in the *Virginia Quarterly Review* (April, 1930) that "aside from the sardonic verses of Robinson Jeffers and the denunciations of Upton Sinclair, no new voice reaches us from the Pacific Coast".

II

San Francisco has always been enamoured of its past. The city that survived the fire suffers from illusions of a past grandeur. Consequently there are two classes in the literati of present-day San Francisco: those who bask complacently in the elderly tradition and quarrel endlessly over debatable points in the bibliography of Bret Harte and kindred questions of equal importance and the younger writers who refuse to take the old guard seriously.

The influence of the University of California, and particularly the individual influence of such men as Ben Lehrman, T. K. Whipple, Leonard Bacon, and Alexander Kaun, has been noticeable. But, of an earlier period, the work of Witter Bynner was of even more importance. Prior to the time that Mr. Bynner signed the Debs Protest and brought down upon his head the denunciation of such a "civilized" San Francisco institution as the Bohemian Club, he had fostered an interesting group of artists. Of these Eda Lou Walton, Genevieve Taggard, Hildegarde Flanner, Hazel Havermale, David Greenhood, Frank Wilcox, Clarkson Crane and Frederick Faust are well known today. Mr. Faust, who survives in the metamorphosis of "Max Brand" writer of detective yarns, wrote brilliant verse in his collegiate days and would return to Berkeley after a night in San Francisco in time to write astonishing examination papers in rhymed couplets. His early volume, *The Village Street and Other Poems,* contains some fine lyrics.

Of this group, so far as San Francisco is concerned, the work of Clarkson Crane is outstanding. In *The Western Shore* he has written the best picture of college life that has appeared in contemporary fiction. It is episodic in form but astonishingly mature for a first novel. Mr. Crane has a fine feeling for "the western shore" and writes excellent prose. His second novel, *Lotus,* is laid in the

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Bay District. It is an unforgettable evocation of San Francisco: every light and shadow and shape of the place is reflected in its pages. It suggests, rather remotely, Tityrus seeking that "youth for whom twelve days each year nine altars smoke". Denied publication because it repeated a theme of homosexuality suggested in *The Western Shore*, *Lotus* should be reissued today. (It has only been privately published.) Mr. Crane has written a new novel, *People in the Sun,* which again records San Francisco with matchless fidelity.

Mr. Oscar Lewis, founder of The Westgate Press in San Francisco, which has issued manuscripts by Lewis Mumford, Thomas Beer and Frank Norris, has done a scholarly piece of research in *Lafcadio Hearn and His Biographers*. Mr. Lewis is under contract to write a history of San Francisco and is at present completing his history of the building of the Trans-Continental Railroad. This volume revolves around the life histories of such men as Mark Hopkins, Leland Stanford, Charley Crocker and C. P. Huntington. It should be an important contribution to western historical writing. Fremont Older, dean of San Francisco journalists, in 1926 published the first volume of his memoirs, *My Own Story*. He has followed this up with an interesting pamphlet: *The Romance of San Francisco Journalism*. These volumes should be supplemented by more complete and more closely documented volumes. Mr. Older's experience has been unrivalled and his knowledge of the deeper forces in American life exceptional. George West, of Sausalito, has a volume of essays coming out this year about California of which "The Success Boys at Stanford" and "Hearst: A Psychological Note", recent articles in *The American Mercury*, form chapters. Other writers in Sausalito are Miriam Allen de Ford, journalist, and Frederick O'Brien. Temporarily absent from San Francisco are such figures as George Douglas and Idwal Jones. Several years ago Mr. Jones wrote a series of articles about old San Francisco for *The American Mercury* that should be reissued in book form today. His first novel, *The Splendid Shilling,* is an interesting picture of early California. Mr. Jones promises to return to California and write a novel about the San Joaquin Valley, a novel in which he threatens to "throw all of California, including the Chinamen".

San Francisco, home of so many famous magazines in times past, is today without a first-rate publication. *Sunset* has become a house-and-garden periodical while *The Overland Monthly* becomes more ridiculous with every issue. The eccentric little magazine published in San Francisco during 1924 by Mr. Lloyd S. Thompson, *"gently, brother"*, with contributions by James Rorty, Genevieve Taggard, Hal Saunders White, Maurice Browne, Miriam Allen de Ford, and Oscar Lewis, threatened to break the calm of San Francisco. It contained Mike Gold's "O Californians! O Ladies and Gentlemen!", a lusty debunking of the idols in California literature. Today the only magazines of consequence in San Francisco are *The Argonaut*, which under the editorship of Mr. Morphy and with contributions by David Greenhood and Kenneth Rexworth, has taken a new lease on life; *The San Franciscan* edited by Mr. Joseph Dyer; and *Hesperian*, a quarterly, edited by Mr. James Hart. A verse magazine, *The Wanderer,* edited by Ethel Turner, has suspended publication.

Mr. Charles Caldwell Dobie continues to act as a conservative interpreter of San Francisco. His new novel *Slow Music* completes his cycle of San Francisco stories. Virginia Hersch, who recently published a fictionized life of El Greco, *Bird of God,* has a new novel, *Woman Under Glass*. A San Francisco journalist, Mr. Fritjoff Michelson, in collaboration with Leon Byrne, has published an interesting travel-adventure yarn in *Ocean Parade*, Kathryn Hulme, a frequent contributor to *The San Franciscan,* is the author of *Arab Interlude*. Miss Hulme is at present living in Los Angeles and is completing a novel. Her stories of San Francisco have ap-

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peared in *Outsiders* and *transition*. The poetry of Marie de L. Welch has been widely published in national and international journals during the last few years. Miss Welch was formerly associated with David Warren Ryder, the well-known San Francisco journalist, as co-editor of the *San Francisco Review*. Elsa Gidlow is the author of *On a Grey Thread*, a volume of verse; she has contributed poems and stories to the reviews. She was formerly on the staff of *Pearson's Magazine* and was also identified with Mr. Ryder in the *Review*. Ruby Boardman has recently published a volume of verse called *Poems*. She belongs to the colony of expatriates in France, as does Mr. Lincoln Fitzell. Helen Hoyt, whose verse is well known, now lives in St. Helena, California.

The minor poets of San Francisco are quite without number. Flora J. Arnstein has published a volume of verse, *A Legacy of Hours*, printed by the distinguished Grabhorn Press. John Galen Howard, director of the School of architecture at the University of California, has written in blank verse the life and ideals of sculptors in *Pheidias*. Frederick Mortimer Clapp of Berkeley has published several volumes of verse. The Cloister Press has published several volumes of verse, including *Three Cycles*, by Marie Louise Raisch and *Water and Wine*, by Sister Mary Edwin of Oakland. There is really no limit to the number of such volumes. One of the most promising writers of the Bay District is Roberta Holloway. She writes excellent verse. I quote an unpublished sonnet, "Consolation for Early September":

Through the deep blood and through the hidden tissue
The seasons pass that tire the steadfast sun,
While thin and frequent afternoons reissue
The brittle gold of summer in new coin.
And passive ground requires a bitter toll
For the late dew whereby the rose was fresh,
And the high tyrannous moon will not control
Its pull upon the faint imperilled flesh.
Then let the fever of the soul remint
The cooling blood to an excess of worth,
And the wide air receive the brief imprint
Of a body upright on the crusted earth,
Whose white limbs dance, the way the wind has gone,
Against the rhythm of time a rhythm of bone.

A representative collection of California verse may be found in *Continent's End*, edited by George Sterling, James Rorty and Genevieve Taggard, and published by the Book Club of California, in 1925.

III

Recent Stanford graduates complain bitterly of the sad neglect into which letters have been cast at Palo Alto. They say that despite the presence of Albert Guerard, the intellectual life of Dr. Hoover's institute is not all that one might anticipate. However, of late Palo Alto has come to life. I attribute this largely to the presence of Mr. Yvor Winters. Mr. Winters published an extremely interesting mimeographed magazine at Palo Alto for some time called *The Gyroscope*. It published some excellent stories, including work by a young Stanford undergraduate, Achilles Holt, of fine promise, and a remarkable story by Caroline Gordon, "The Long Day", which *Scribner's* republished last August. Janet Lewis, wife of Yvor Winters, has written stories and verse for the reviews. She has also published a volume of verse, *The Wheel in Midsummer*. A young Stanford graduate, Mr. Howard Baker of Whittier, California, who is now living in Paris, has published excellent verse in *The Gyroscope*. I quote some lines from the poetic sequence, "City of the San Joaquin," that appeared in *The American Caravan* (1928):

In the center of the Great Valley,
Where the live-oaks, black
In the glare of the sun,
Loomed out of the sea of crisp grass,
And the click-click of cicadas
Clashed the white radiance . . .
But where at dawn
Rose light gathered as in a bowl,

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And at evening the Valley
Filled with shadow, leaving
The rim in a crimson flare . . .
There they came and built the City.

They built it of the sun-baked adobe
And with the logs of the sun-purged live-oak.
Straggling wagon trains came there,
And worn families pushed out
To wrest farms from the desert.
In the winter when the mists came
They bought whiskey and quinine in the city.
They waited for the sun;
Then the people became worshippers
Of the Sun and the sun-filled Valley.

At Stanford, too, is a young Japanese poet, Bunichi Nagawa. The Half Moon Press, at Palo Alto, has recently issued his first volume of verse, *Hidden Flame,* with an introduction by Mr. Winters. As Mr. Winters notes, Nagawa is really a bilingual poet, although he is more in the English tradition than Yone Noguchi, whose *From the Eastern Sea* and *Selected Poems* were published some years ago. Noguchi was associated with Joaquin Miller in California for several years. I quote "I Shall Not Rise Again" from the winter issue of *Hesperian* which is fairly representative of Mr. Nagawa's work:

The sun is drowned upon the shapeless waste
Of noon; and as tears drowned upon the quiet
Rise of emotion, I lie face downward in
The grass; I lie spread on the grass, and feel
Thick earth beneath the weight of my body, and though I
From whom laughter is gone, know that I am no more
Than a heap of shadowy mass fallen hard,
I gather my slow grief into wine of wordless
Tenderness, press it firmly against the earth,
Nay, I press my soul that will not rest nor stir,
Measure it against the vast muteness of what I am not;
I shall not rise again till my weariness
Is fully damp and is lost within the flow
Of my blood; flow of my blood banked by a steadier
Weariness that shall be timeless and undisturbed.

Another interesting Japanese writer in California is Ken Nakazawa, Professor of Oriental Art and Philosophy at the University of Southern California. Mr. Nakazawa's *Weaver of the Frost* is a delightful collection of Japanese fairy stories. His work has appeared frequently in the *Atlantic Monthly.*

Not far from Los Gatos, on a hillside overlooking the Santa Clara Valley, live Colonel Erskine Scott Wood and his wife, Sara Bard Field. Callers who brave the steep climb to "The Cats" leave with the glowing conviction that there, if at all, is a bit of California that is forever civilized.

IV

There are really only two art colonies in California: one at Carmel and the other in San Quentin Prison.

Carmel is famous today, not primarily because it is an "art colony" but because it is the home of Robinson Jeffers. Whatever one may think of Mr. Jeffers's poetry, or the chaotic commentary on his work, it is quite obvious that he towers above all of his California predecessors. The intensity of his feeling for the Carmel shore-line does not require emphasis. Mr. Herbert Klein, a Los Angeles newspaperman, has completed a scholarly analysis of the prosody of Jeffers, which will be published soon in a limited edition by the western publisher, Jake Zeitlin. Richard Masten, of Carmel, has written a graceful story in *Saint Udo.* It is, unfortunately, little more than another contribution to the "beautiful" school of Thornton Wilder. A much sturdier plant is the *Amarilis* of Christine Turner Curtis. This story, slight as it is, is perhaps the best picture of Carmel that has appeared in recent years. There are several volumes of "exquisite" verse published annually in Carmel of which the least said the more charitable.

The other art colony is located within the walls of San Quentin Prison. It is a more typically California colony than that of Car-

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mel. The San Quentin School of California fiction owes a great deal to Mr. Sidney Herschel Small of San Rafael. Mr. Small started a class in writing at San Quentin several years ago. The progress of his pupils acquired such notoriety that the Board of Prison Directors persuaded him to discontinue the class. Mr. Small is, *en passant*, the author of a trilogy of novels on the Spanish period in California of which *Sword and Candle* and *The Splendid Californians* are the first two volumes. Two of his pupils, Robert Joyce Tasker and Ernest Booth, have won considerable fame. Booth is a sensationalist but Tasker seems to possess genuine promise. His *Grimhaven* is a substantial document. *The Bulletin,* a magazine published within the prison walls, is more readable than the average California periodical. Tasker has recently been paroled. But Tom Mooney is still in San Quentin and so long as he remains there one cannot write of purely "literary" matters without a sense of shame.

V

In Los Angeles there are two classes of writers: those who are connected with the motion-picture industry and those who are not. Of the early group of writers for motion pictures, prior to the advent of the talkies which precipitated a horde of New York playwrights, several interesting figures have attained national fame. Of these Anita Loos is foremost. Miss Loos is capable of writing superb nonsense, but, unfortunately, she devotes herself almost exclusively to the screen. Lorna Moon was another of these early writers for the screen. She retired from scenario work several years ago and wrote *Dark Star*, a novel that enjoyed an excellent sale. I visited her a short time before her death. She was propped up in a bed, the soft yellow and green of its coverings being adroitly selected to match the foliage on the hillside around her Hollywood home. Witty, droll, sophisticated, it seemed miraculous that so frail a body could house such a swift and roving mind. She outlined the novel on which she was working: a story of two lovers who met in a tuberculosis sanatorium near Los Angeles. It was an impudent, tragi-comic tale. Her *bons mots* are still quoted along Hollywood Boulevard and in the studios. Another writer of this group is Mr. Edwin Justus Mayer, whose plays *The Firebrand* and *Children of the Darkness* have been deservedly successful. His autobiography, *A Preface to Life,* contains a startling chapter on Hollywood.

Since the talkies, an imposing list of novelists and playwrights have been summoned to Hollywood. Sidney Howard, Louis Bromfield, Stephen Vincent Benét, Joseph March, Martin Flavin, Owen Davis, Herman Mankiewicz, Ernest Pascal, S. N. Behrman, Ben Hecht, Maxwell Anderson, Laurence Stallings, Jim Tully, George Abbott, Charles MacArthur, Sam Ornitz, John Bright, Wallace Smith, and Helen Grace Carlisle, are but a few of the writers who have worked in Hollywood within the last few years. Many of them now live in Hollywood. As a winter resort Hollywood has grown in popularity. Last winter in the Hollywood home of Sampson Rafaelson, the playwright, I saw W. E. Woodward, Joseph Wood Krutch, Lynn Riggs, George O'Neil and Lewis Browne. Don Marquis is now a resident, as are W. R. Burnett and Wallace Smith. Mr. Bromfield writes that "frost-bitten Italy, shivering Sicily, and the poor mistral-burnt Riviera, trying so hard to look tropical, are sickly beside Southern California". Hamlin Garland, now a resident, speaks of the western shore as "the fortunate coast". Dorothy Cottrell is another resident. All of these recently imported writers are not, however, so enthusiastic about Southern California. Mr. John V. A. Weaver writes in this vein:

Beside your sea of meaningless, bright blue,
Girdled with smug, pretentious, painted peaks,
You sprawl, while the insipid sunshine leaks
Through the high-fogged complacency of you.

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Expatriate Iowans hourly celebrate
Your sawdust oranges, your paper roses,
Your subdivided sands, your cultural poses,
And breed the spawn that thrives when morons mate.

Hail to your grinning insincerity!
Hail to the emptiness of your women's eyes!
Hail to your million frantic, antic lies!
Hail to your Weather, Hail!—Oh, God to be

Waist-deep in slush, penniless, ague-cold
But Eastern-circumstanced—and Eastern-souled!
But I am given the sharpest gripe
By Movie-Chat writers and curried tripe.

This can be cured up by a shot
Of Brisbane, followed by something hot.

The field of motion-picture criticism has brought two interesting publications to Los Angeles. The first of these to arrive was *The Film Spectator*, edited by Mr. Welford Beaton. And now Mr. Charles Lapworth, formerly editor of the London *Daily Herald*, has come to Hollywood to edit *Film Quarterly*. Mr. Lapworth lived in Los Angeles several years ago when he edited the Los Angeles *Graphic*. In the files of this interesting weekly, which survives today as *Saturday Night*, one can find drawings by Norman Bel Geddes, cartoons by Will Dyson, book reviews by Bruce Bliven, and stories and articles by Walter Vodges. Mr. Vodges is the author of a novel, *A Great Man*, about the gold-rush era.

A number of Los Angeles newspapermen have recently published novels. There is Don Ryan, formerly of the Los Angeles *Record*, author of *Angel's Flight* and *A Roman Holiday*, and Gilmore Millen, of the *Herald*, who has scored heavily with *Sweet Man*. Carroll and Garrett Graham have written of Hollywood, after the manner of press agents, in *Queer People*. Pauline Stiles has a novel devoted to Hollywood Bowl, *The Mote and the Beam*. Dorothy Hertzog, who writes about the motion-picture queens for the Hearst publications, has published a novel. Such work is of slight importance but it does dispel the legend that Los Angeles is populated entirely by "expatriate Iowans".

Of the younger writers, Louis Adamic of San Pedro easily heads the list. He has done an excellent translation of Ivan Cankar's *Yerney's Justice* for the Vanguard Press. Some of his short stories such as "Superman" which appeared in *The American Mercury*, and "Philippine Interlude" in *Plain Talk*, have won high praise. Several years ago he published a study of Robinson Jeffers. (In the Chapbook Series published by the University of Washington.) The Viking Press will soon publish his study of the radical movement, *Dynamite*. It is a dramatic, extremely penetrating, study of the use of violence in labor agitation. Owen Francis, whose short stories have appeared in *The American Mercury*, *Plain Talk* and *Scribner's*, gives promise of fine work. Roy Milton Iliff has published a first novel, *In the Red*, which has been favorably reviewed. Liveright is publishing two novels by Los Angeles writers: Charles Gray and Harry Carlisle. Arthur Hanko, of the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios, has published some interesting work in *The American Mercury*.

Los Angeles has sheltered a flock of writers who have lived there for a time and then moved to more congenial surroundings. It would be an impossible task to catalogue these transients. Meridel Le Sueur, for instance, lived in Los Angeles for about five years and in Sacramento for a time. She has written several remarkable short stories, notably "Laundress" which appeared in *The American Mercury*, and "Annunciation" in the new quarterly, *U. S. A.*, edited by Harold Mason in Philadelphia. These stories, with such occasional manuscripts as "Evening in a Lumber Town" and "Holiday" from *The New Masses* and *Pagany*, have been impressive. A new Los Angeles publishing house will bring out several of her stories of California in special editions, while a novel, *The Strangers*, will be published soon in the East. Mr. Whit Burnett, a former California jour-

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nalist, has published some fine work. He is now a correspondent in the Balkans and a leading member of the *transition* group.

Previously I have mentioned Hildegarde Flanner. James Rorty has referred to her as "one of the most interesting woman poets in America". Her latest volume of verse, *Time's Profile,* was one of the most distinguished volumes of poetry published last year. Mildred Bowers, of San Diego, published a volume of verse which was included in the Yale Series of Younger Poets. Mr. Leroy MacLeod, of Los Angeles, has published a volume of verse, *Driven,* and a new novel, *Three Steeples.*

To this brief list of the younger writers might be added the following names: Stephen French Whitman, who twenty years ago with his novel *Predestined* set a new model for American fiction; Henry Chester Tracy, a scholarly thinker who lives in Hollywood, and whose books *English as Experience, Scientific Humanism, Towards the Open,* and *The Shadow Eros,* and his recent *American Naturists,* have won the warmest praise by such writers as Zona Gale, Julian Huxley and Mary Austin; J. William Lloyd, patriarch, friend of Havelock Ellis, Edward Carpenter and Horace Traubel, who lives in the "Swallow's Nest" near Roscoe, and whose latest collection of essays, *Eneres,* has an introduction by Havelock Ellis; Duncan Aikman, whose *Calamity Jane* still puzzles the collectors and professors of Western Americana, now West Coast correspondent for the Baltimore *Sun*; H. Wildon Carr, outstanding authority on the philosophies of Croce and Bergson, professor of philosophy at the University of Southern California; Wilson Follett; Sadakichi Hartmann, who lives at Beaumont, and publishes mystical pamphlets; Will Levington Comfort, another mystic; Ernest R. Trattner; Gordon Ray Young; Upton Sinclair; John Hodgdon Bradley; and Paul Jordan Smith. One might also add such fine individual performances as *These Are My Jewels* by Miss L. B. Campbell. This ironic story, written by a professor in the University of California at Los Angeles, and *Weeds,* a novel by Edith Summers Kelley, are distinguished first novels. Mrs. Kelley's poetry is now being published widely in the magazines. Lanier Bartlett, co-author of *Adios!* has recently edited Major Horace Bell's reminiscences *On the Old West Coast.*

VI

An article about California writing at the present time must necessarily be discursive and full of tentative lists, rather than definite conclusions. The scene is confused by extraneous traditions and influences which cannot be ignored since they may become significant. The work of the younger writers that I have stressed is a slight beginning, but, with diligent cultivation, it may yet eliminate the spurious associations attached to California letters. All that one can honestly write at this time is that the scene is not as overrun with local poetesses and orators as it was a decade ago.

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MIND'S EYE TROUBLE

by Robert Benchley

Among other personal shortcomings (a list of which will be furnished on application to any one of my host of friends) I seem to have been endowed at birth by a Bad, Bad Fairy with a paucity of visual imagination which amounts practically to a squint. The delicate surface of my mind's eye, so well compared to the film of a camera in the vivid phraseology of our school-teachers, must have stopped recording images when I was fifteen years old, for I have about eight exposures with which to work in conjuring up scenes in my mind for the stories I read. I seem to be quite unable to evolve any new pictures for myself.

To those who go about picturing new scenes in their imagination for every novel they read, this may sound a little incredible. I do not expect to gain any admirers through such a confession of weakness. I want only to give some idea of the handicap I have had to fight in my plucky struggle to acquaint myself with the best in the world's literature, and perhaps explain why I have more or less given the whole thing up and devoted myself to the reading of gentlemen's essays and the daily newspapers.

This limitation of mine might not be so cramping in its effect if the few visual images which I have were not confined almost exclusively to street scenes in Worcester, Massachusetts, the fortunate city which gave me birth and fostered me until I was seventeen. Now Worcester, Massachusetts, is a splendid city, with an excellent school system and a wide range of manufacturing interests, but it is not the ideal locale for the *Chanson de Roland* or the adventures of Ivanhoe. It does not have quite the bucolic atmosphere essential to a complete feeling for the Wessex of Hardy, and, elm-shaded and pleasant though many of its streets are, it is not likely that Hugo had any such place in mind when he wrote *Les Misérables*. However, regardless of what Hugo had in mind, *I* have Front Street, Worcester, in mind when I read it.

Probably the most perverted of my imaginary localities is the one in which I have, for all time, placed the rise and fall of the Roman Empire. During that period of my youth when I was first writing tiny English words over the lines of Latin in a small volume called *Gates to Caesar*, and was looking up the Furniss notes in the back of Shakespeare's historical drama of a somewhat similar name, I was spending my romping hours with a noisy group of young people who gathered in the driveway and under the *porte-cochère* of a white house at the corner of May and Woodland Streets. (I might add that the little lady who lived in the white house later grew so accustomed to having me around that she finally married me, which may account for my preoccupation with this particular *mise en scène*).

It is here, in the middle of this driveway, that I pictured every scene of Roman life, even to the feasts of Lucullus, which, so far

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as I know, were really held indoors. Caesar was murdered under the *porte-cochère* and Antony made his speech standing on the fence post at the end of the driveway, with the mob of Romans tossing high their sweaty caps in air in such numbers that they extended 'way over across the street to the front lawn of the Congregational Church parsonage. And, in spite of my reason telling me that the subsequent military action must surely have taken place some distance from the Forum, I am unable to whip my imagination into anything less parochial than to picture Brutus's tent as being pitched on the other corner of the parsonage lawn, easily visible to those wives and sweethearts who stayed at home in the shade of Romulus and Remus by the *porte-cochère*. Even the phrase "Caesar's wife", which one hears so much nowadays (usually in a misquotation) brings to my mind the corner of May and Woodland Streets in Worcester, and whenever I hear it I wonder what ever became of Dr. Scott, the Congregational parson.

Once in a while I do shift the Roman scene to the map of Italy as it used to be in the Rand, McNally text-book which was furnished free by the lavish School Board. I am willing to concede that the invading hordes of Goths and Visigoths could not have come very impressively over the back fence at No. 30 May Street; so, by a terrific wrench of the imagination, I lift myself bodily into the air above the old map of the Italian Boot as I remember it (which is probably not accurately) and look down on them charging out from the cockroach chain of Alps in a sort of impersonal array of pin-heads. This far I will go in admitting that Rome was not located at the corner of May and Woodland Streets, but it is only in the emergency of extensive military operations involving the Alps. When I return to Maurice Baring's *Diminutive Dramas* and the dinner parties of Calpurnia and Lucullus, I am back again under the *porte-cochère*, for there, and there alone, lies the grandeur that was Rome.

For my Dickens settings I am transported on the one lame wing of my imagination perhaps two blocks from Rome, to the foot of Shepard Street hill. Here it was that I myself lived at such times as I was not hanging around the white house at the corner of May and Woodland. Practically every tale out of Dickens takes place, in my mind's eye, on the second floor of this house, although it in no possible way resembles even a tyro's idea of London in the thirties and forties. Our "sitting-room" could not, by the stretch of any imagination except mine, be associated with Scrooge's office, nor could the bay window ever have served as deskroom for Bob Cratchit. But so long as I hear *A Christmas Carol* read aloud (which looks as if it might go on now for some years), it is in these unbelievable surroundings that I am forced to place my friends.

The fact that I have seen London offices which would be better, and London dwellings which would be more appropriate, as settings for my Dickens, cannot alter the imperishable conviction in the camera obscura of my mind that Bob Cratchit and Barnaby Rudge and David Copperfield all made their exits and their entrances by the door at the left of the stairway and delivered all their speeches in front of the fireplace in the "sitting-room" of this house at No. 3 Shepard Street, Worcester, Massachusetts.

For some reason, probably because *A Tale of Two Cities* is not real Dickens, I have yielded enough to place the execution of Sydney Carton on the Worcester Common, directly back of the City Hall. I can account for this vagary only by recalling a bronze plate in this vicinity which announces that, on this spot, on such and such a date (*you* know) the Declaration of Independence was read to the assembled citizens of Worcester. I must have somehow confused the War of the American Revolution with the French Revolution (a quite natural mistake in a mind so informally thrown together as mine) and taken it for granted that the

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guillotine stood on the site now occupied by the equestrian statue of General Devens.

You must not think, however, that the neighborhood of No. 3 Shepard Street is limited to Dickens lore. Between Nos. 3 and 5 there was what is known as a "side yard". It was perhaps as big as a small miniature golf course, but it served as a screaming and chasing ground for such children as were not at the moment screaming and chasing up in the May Street driveway. This territory represents, to my mind, the Solid South. In it are included acres and acres of cotton fields and miles and miles of levees. On the tar walk which led to the clothes reel in the back yard, Simon Legree whipped Uncle Tom into admitting that, belong his body to whom it might, his soul belonged to God. Eliza, in her heroic flight, had only to run from the clothes reel to the extension of the tar walk which led to the cellar bulkhead, and she was safe in Canada. And even Stonewall Jackson, pausing in his march from Frederick(or was it *to* Frederick?) to make his gallant gesture in the direction of the Old Gray Head, found himself and his troops directly under the bay-window from which Bob Cratchit, had he cared to look on a cool September morn, could have witnessed the whole inspiring incident and might even have given Barbara Frietchie an encouraging pat on the back and said, " 'Atta girl!"

I can offer no possible explanation of why, within exactly these same precincts, Werther wrestled with his sorrows. Perhaps no explanation is needed.

Side yards seem to figure prominently in this stunted imagination of mine. My aunt, having come into closer contact with the manufacturing interests of Worcester than my mother, had a larger side yard on her Woodland Street property. It was so large that it had no fence around it, although a horse named (for a reason which I have never before thought to question) Drex was often turned out to graze in it. Drex must have been a particularly trustworthy horse, for Woodland Street was far from being a rural thoroughfare, and escape would have been but a matter of a fairly quick bound for him. However that may be, this side yard of my aunt's became, almost before I was able to read, the scene of every story connected with the West (or Australia). Beginning quite logically with *Black Beauty*, I placed—and still place—every scene of round-ups, Indian massacres, Santa Fé trailing and even Yukon exploration, right in this side yard of my Aunt Mary Elizabeth's. I do not even remember what her house was like (except that in her kitchen I was taught how to tell time by the consecutive positions taken up by the hands of the clock), for she moved from there before I was six years old. But her side yard is still with me and will be so long as I read tales of the Wild West and of Man's struggle to tame the elements. The fact that, directly across from it, was one of those white houses with a porch and a small tower (in which the sewing-room was located) so popular in New England in the nineties, does not seem to cramp my vision in its stubborn attempt to make the vicinity into a replica of the Great Open Spaces. To me it is the West, and the West had better accommodate itself to my whim.

No amount of travelling or sightseeing can shift me from this visionary inertia. I have been in Venice, but the Venice of bookland is to me simply King Street flooded with water. Byron lived in his elaborate and complicated sin in a house at the corner of King and Shepard Streets, with gondolas plying their creaking way directly up King Street hill in defiance of all man-made laws of gravity. Clarissa Harlowe carried on her incessant correspondence sitting in a room overlooking the playground of the Woodland Street School, a playground which was also the scene of Tom Sawyer's evasions of Aunt Polly, Katherine Mansfield's garden, Swinnerton's *Nocturne* and Walpole's *Fortitude*. I might say, in weak extenuation of this unaccountable hodge-podge, that the

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playground did have a high board fence which separated it from the fairly impressive grounds of an estate belonging to the man who owned the first automobile ever seen in Worcester (a little thing of his own invention). I don't know just what this explains, but somehow it all seems very logical to me.

The question now arises, in those circles in which any interest at all is evinced, what am I to do about all this? What is the sense in going on reading, if everything is to take place in the South End of Worcester, Massachusetts? I have tried travel and I have tried osteopathy. I have deliberately said to myself, when I find that I am sending Proust walking up and down Woodland Street with Albertine: "Come, come, man! This is not Normandy!" But always I go back in my mind's eye to a district as parochial as Yorkville or Chelsea, from which there is no escape.

My solution at one time was to stick to the daily papers. I caught myself, however, placing Moscow on the Common back of the Worcester City Hall and locating Galveston as a black spot on a red state on a Rand, McNally map. Perhaps I had just better give up reading entirely. But then what else is there to do?

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FORD MADOX FORD—
A NEGLECTED CONTEMPORARY

by Granville Hicks

It would not, I imagine, please Mr. Ford to be called neglected. He has written more than sixty books, and he has seen the Shelleys of the last half-century very plain indeed. When he was in his twenties he was called the most perfect stylist in the English language; Joseph Conrad sought him as a collaborator; and, more recently, his war tetralogy has led to his being compared with Proust. He has not, obviously, been neglected in any ordinary sense. This is not a tale of a lonely genius, left to starve in the conventional garret, bequeathing to the world a slender manuscript of exquisite verse or a few pages of miraculous prose. It is a much more puzzling story, the story of a man who has been in the thick of every literary fray and yet is ignored by the literary historians, a man whose individual books have, as they appeared, been greeted as unusual achievements but whose work as a whole has made little impression on the contemporary mind. In several rather detailed studies of modern literature his name is not even mentioned, and no one, so far as I know, has ever made an effort to estimate his importance. Everyone knows he exists—it would be rather hard, all things considered, to ignore the fact—but there are few people who could accurately tell you what he has done.

Ford was born in 1873. His was a pre-Raphaelite boyhood. In the home of his grandfather, Ford Madox Brown, he looked upon Holman Hunt, Edward Burne-Jones, William Morris, and the Rossettis, one of whom, William, was his uncle. Ford's father, South German by birth and a Doctor of Philosophy from Göttingen, was music critic for *The Times*; he was an ardent Wagnerian, an admirer of Schopenhauer, and a foe to Prussianism. Young Hueffer—the surname was changed to Ford after the war—grew up in the literal shadow of late Victorian genius, and his first words must have been spoken shrilly in order to be audible above the argumentative rumblings of poets and painters.

Pre-Raphaelism furnished Ford with subjects for two biographies, a critical monograph, and a book of reminiscences. More important, however, than any literary material that his early environment gave him was the stimulus that it must have provided. Whether such stimulus was altogether beneficial is a question. Constant contact with genius might inculcate in a youth a feeling that he must assert himself, that he must vindicate his right to associate with the great. A youth in such an environment might become arrogant and patronizing, might develop the familiar traits that compensate for a sense of inferiority. That such a development took place in Ford cannot be demonstrated but it may be suspected. What is sure is that some stimulus or other led him to

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begin his literary career when he was in his teens. His *Collected Poems* contains verses written, he tells us, when he was fifteen and published in *The Torch* in 1891. It must have been at about the same time that he published his first book, for its appearance was made the excuse for dismissing him from the school he was attending. Other books followed; he had at least four to his credit when, at the age of twenty-two, he began to write his grandfather's biography. His first volume of poems, *Poems for Pictures*, appeared in 1897.

It appears, then, that Ford was what might be called an established writer, though he was only twenty-five, when Edward Garnett brought Joseph Conrad to Limpsfield. Garnett was always, Ford writes, bringing the "Great New" to see him. Conrad had only recently published his third novel; compared to Ford he was a mere beginner. In the course of the conversation Ford mentioned a bit of local history, and at their next meeting Conrad proposed that they collaborate in writing a novel around this affair. Conrad, conscious of the inadequacies of his English style, was seeking some master of the language with whom to work, and Henley, he said, had told him that Ford was incomparably the best stylist extant. Ford, though by no means eager for such an undertaking, agreed, and *Romance* was begun.

Romance was not published until five years later. Difficulties arose and the book was dropped. The collaborators began and finished *The Inheritors*, which was published in 1901, and then, in 1903, completed *Romance*. The only other fruit of their collaboration was *The Nature of a Crime*, published in the *English Review* in April, 1909, signed with the extraordinary pseudonym Baron Ignatz von Aschendorf, and reprinted after Conrad's death in 1924. *Some Reminiscences* —the American title is *A Personal Record*— was written for the first issues of the *English Review* at Ford's suggestion and was in part dictated to him.

In his *Joseph Conrad* and in an appendix to *The Nature of a Crime* Mr. Ford has fully recorded the details of this collaboration. He put himself, so he says, entirely at the service of Conrad, not only in the composition of the books they wrote together but also in the development of the novels that Conrad was at the same time writing independently. That Conrad may well have profited by Ford's assistance is not to be doubted, for Ford's fluent and colloquial style has qualities that Conrad's lacks. Their joint achievements, however, are not altogether impressive. *The Inheritors*, a kind of political satire, is thin and almost unreadable. *Romance*, though more substantial and not without excellent pages—both in the sections attributed to Conrad and in those allotted to Ford—certainly displays neither the characteristic Conradian virtues nor yet Ford's more admirable qualities. Though their theories of fiction were much the same, their temperaments were very different, and it is doubtful if either could have profited from a prolongation of their alliance.

After the appearance of *Romance* each man turned to the independent development of his talents. For Ford the next five years were chiefly spent in two enterprises, a trilogy of books on England and a trilogy of historical novels concerning Katherine Howard and Henry VIII. *The Soul of London*, *The Heart of the Country*, and *The Spirit of the People*—the three were published in the United States in one volume entitled *England and the English*—are impressionistic, even at times arbitrarily so, but they are pleasantly written and have an air of plausibility. *The Fifth Queen*, *Privy Seal*, and *The Fifth Queen Crowned* led Conrad to write to Galsworthy, "The whole cycle is a noble conception—the swan song of Historical Romance —and frankly I am glad to have heard it".

It was with a not unenviable reputation and after a varied career that Ford undertook, late in 1908, the publication of the *English Review*, the principal of his colleagues being Arthur Pearson Marwood, the original of the

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Christopher Tietjens of the war tetralogy. The legend is that they founded the magazine because Thomas Hardy could not find a periodical that would publish his poem "A Sunday Morning Tragedy". Certainly the poem may be found in the first issue, where it is the leading contribution and is followed by a story by Henry James, the first instalment of *Some Reminiscences*, the first instalment of *Tono-Bungay*, and stories and articles by Galsworthy, W. H. Hudson, and Count Tolstoy. Cunningham-Grahame, Anatole France, Norman Douglas, W. B. Yeats, Arnold Bennett, H. M. Tomlinson and Ezra Pound wrote for subsequent issues. Ford contributed a series of editorials, later published in a book called *The Critical Attitude.*

Under the editorship of Ford and Marwood the *English Review* was perhaps as distinguished a periodical as twentieth-century England has seen. Ford's connection with it was, however, brief, for Austin Harrison became its editor in 1910. From 1910 to the outbreak of the war Ford's career seems rather desultory. He was, it is true, writing and publishing many books. When *Memories and Impressions* appeared in 1911 he could observe that it was his thirty-seventh volume. But one has the feeling that he was gathering his forces for some more memorable exploit than any of the thirty-seven books could be said to represent. In 1913 he used a book on Henry James not only to acknowledge his indebtedness to that master but also to state his views of what the novel should be. In 1914, as part of a tidying-up process, he published his *Collected Poems.*

The truth is that Ford was meditating retirement from literature. As he tells the story in *Thus to Revisit*, various critics had announced that he was dead, and he was willing to take their word for it. He had, however, one task to do. It had seemed to him that not until one was forty could one expect to write a novel of force and originality. He had tossed off sundry historical romances, but they scarcely counted. Now that the requisite terms of years had expired, he proposed to write his novel. His literary demise would, therefore, have to be postponed until he had finished *The Good Soldier.*

The Good Soldier was not published until 1915. It is one of some half-dozen books that the war cheated of due recognition. By the time it appeared Ford was engaged in non-literary activities far different from those agricultural endeavors that he had looked forward to when he planned his retirement. Trained in devotion to France by his grandfather and in hatred of Prussia by his father, he immediately threw himself into the war, giving to the country his services both as soldier and as propagandist. In the latter capacity he wrote *When Blood Is Their Argument* and *Between St. Dennis and St. George.* Men of more ardently pacifistic principles wrote, in those days, far more bellicose books, and it is idle to single out Mr. Ford for special condemnation. It may, however, be recorded that *When Blood Is Their Argument* was widely distributed in the United States, and anyone familiar with our own 1917-18 contributions to the discussion of war guilt will recognize it as a primary source of local opinion on Teutonic culture.

The two pieces of propaganda, a volume of poetry, and *Zeppelin Nights*, written in collaboration with Violet Hunt, were the only violations between 1914 and 1921 of Mr. Ford's vow of total abstinence. For that reason he felt justified, when he undertook to write a book on the literary scene, in calling it *Thus to Revisit.* It is, of Ford's many books, the most amusing and the most irritating. Ostensibly a treatise on contemporary writers, it concerns itself primarily with one Ford Madox Ford. This Ford, we learn, has "the faculty of absolute indifference to my personal fate or the fate of my work". He is often hailed as the greatest living critic, novelist, and poet. When he is attacked or slandered he merely shrugs his shoulders.

It is, no doubt, Mr. Ford's way of talking about himself that has prejudiced many of

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his contemporaries against him, and it is quite possible that his tone in such writings is the partial cause of his being neglected: it is difficult to take seriously a man who so recklessly exposes himself to the charge of asininity. There must have been those who, when *Thus to Revisit* appeared, sincerely regretted, on Ford's own behalf, that the pledge of retirement had not been kept. But if the vow had not been violated our literature would be considerably the poorer, for it is since 1921 that Ford has written his remarkable series of war novels.

The development of the war tetralogy has been accompanied by a determined plunge into the troubled waters of contemporary literature. One of the ventures of this latest period was the *Transatlantic Review*, which gave Ford the opportunity to abandon himself once more to what he regards as an inherited characteristic—"the hope of discovering new, beautiful talents". Paul Valéry, Nathan Asch, E. E. Cummings, Ernest Hemingway, James Joyce, Glenway Wescott, Gertrude Stein and Ezra Pound were among the contributors to this periodical during the year of its existence. An Englishman of partly German parentage, living in France and frequently visiting America, Ford has become a kind of international nursemaid to the arts in general. His attempts at national interpretation—*A Mirror to France* and *New York Is Not America*—may be regarded as by-products of this phase of his career. He has also turned again to the historical novel.

There Ford stands, with, one trusts, considerable of a career before him, but certainly with enough behind him to warrant the attention of the critic. Perhaps it is because there is so much of a career behind Ford—so many books and in such a variety of forms—that critics have hesitated to try to define his position among his contemporaries. The task is not, however, so difficult as it appears; examination of his work soon shows that we may legitimately confine our attention to his novels. Even in his non-fiction Ford is primarily the novelist and should be so judged. His books about France, England, and America have the merits of a novelist's note-books: quickness and accuracy of observation, an interest in the precise rendering of physical and mental qualities, a sense of the dramatic possibilities of situations that are only hastily and fragmentarily seen. His criticism also, though Ford lacks the patience to rear that structure of hypothesis and generalization towards which the judicial critic aims, does show the sensitiveness and discrimination of a thoughtful novelist to whom no phase of his craft can be uninteresting.

One might even, without extravagance, go on to say that Ford's poetry discloses his talents as a master of prose fiction. He has said that the conventional forms of verse are either too easy or too difficult to be worth bothering with, and certainly his own experiments in these forms are little more than the exercises of a bright student. In *vers libre* his performances are more individual, but even here the level of intensity is usually low and the diction often careless. The imagery is fresh, but it is involved and leisurely; usually it could be transferred to a page of prose without the reader's being conscious of any incongruity. Ford probably does not lack the qualities of imagination that are essential to poetry, but he has never made the effort to master poetic expression. The writing of verse seems to be for him a kind of recreation, whereas the writing of fiction is a matter of careful artistry.

Ford has, in short, tried his hand at all sorts of things, and his brilliant resourcefulness has always stood in the way of complete failure; but there is only one literary form that he has taken the trouble to master, and that is the novel. Only the novel has been sufficiently attractive to persuade him to subject his facility to a thorough discipline, and, though his work in other fields is never discreditable, it is his novels alone that entitle him to serious consideration. Perhaps, indeed,

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the best one can say is that in whatever he undertakes there are evidences of a first-rate talent for the novel.

In examining the novels we come first upon the historical romances. Whether Ford's disparagement of this type of fiction is purely *ex post facto* we cannot tell, but we are not likely to disagree with his judgment. The historical novel seldom permits the full expression of a rich mind or a scrupulous technique, and it may even be that some of the qualities we think of as necessary for the creation of first-rate fiction are for the historical novelist only handicaps. The historical novel should have a clear and fast-moving plot; it should contain plenty of incident; its characters should be boldly presented. In Ford's "Henry VIII" series these qualities are not to be found. The author's interest, on the contrary, is centered in the presentation of states of mind and the rendering of sequences that are largely psychological. Lacking the animation, the pageantry and the simplicity of the true romance, they derive their interest almost altogether from virtues not ordinarily discoverable in works of their kind. Conrad was not far wrong in calling the series the swan song of historical romance; the *genre* cannot flourish long in an atmosphere of sophistication, analysis and artifice. What Ford was clearly working toward was the psychological novel. Difficult as it is to accept his statement that, while waiting for the crucial fortieth year to arrive, he consciously devoted himself to the writing of *divertissements*, one cannot deny that his earlier work was, though not in any obvious way, a suitable preparation for the tasks assigned to his maturity.

On his fortieth birthday Ford began writing *The Good Soldier*. The subject on which he chose to "extend himself" was one that, he says, had been hatching for a decade, and to this period of gestation the novel doubtless owes both sureness of conception and strength of construction. The aim is to present a situation in the lives of five persons, and for method Ford selected one that, though it had certain great advantages, offered towering obstacles. The narrator is one of the major participants in the story. During the several years in which the situation was developing he was completely ignorant of what was going on; and yet at the moment he tells the story he is, of course, aware of all the facts. Since he is conceived as a naïve person, he could not be allowed to withhold facts for the sake of effect; and since he is supposed to be telling the story as it recreates itself in his mind, he could not be allowed to develop the narrative in simple chronological order. He must present the characters at first in one light and afterwards in a quite different light, but he must not do this consciously. Ford's problem was to maintain the consistency of his narrator and at the same time reveal the situation with complete accuracy and with careful consideration of climactic effect.

To test Ford's success all that is necessary is to read the novel a second time. Though you know how the story ends, though you have seen the characters as they really are, you cannot find a phrase that is misleading nor can you discover any withholding of facts that the narrator could justly be expected to give. On the other hand, you discover in the early chapters references and allusions that carefully prepare the reader for his final impression. It comes close to being a flawless book, remarkable for its sustained inventiveness and its sound, unfaltering progress. There was justice in calling it "the finest French novel in the English language".

With all its technical virtuosity, however, *The Good Soldier* is not merely a *tour de force*. There is no disproportion between the technical skill and the solidity of the work. As a revelation of life the book is worthy of the technique, and every formal subtlety adds to the accuracy and force of that revelation. With the utmost tenderness Ford pushes deeper and deeper into the minds of his characters, disclosing realms of passion and agony and meanness. Conrad never attempted to

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present so complex a situation, and James never ventured to explore emotion so intense and volcanic. When the book reaches its terrifying close, one realizes that only such formal perfection as Ford exhibits could bear the weight of this tragedy.

If Ford had kept his vow of literary nonparticipation, *The Good Soldier* would have been a magnificent climax to a not undistinguished career, but, standing so far above its predecessors, it would have had something of the appearance of a happy accident. Fortunately the vow was not kept, and we have the war tetralogy to set beside *The Good Soldier*. This group of novels has suffered because of its subject. There are, it appears, special standards by which war books are judged, and according to those standards *The Good Soldier* and its sequels fall short. But this is patently unfair, for they are only incidentally war books and are primarily psychological novels, to be judged precisely as one judges *The Good Soldier*.

Considered in this way, they show the originality and clarity with which Ford can create characters and the force and logic with which he can present situations. How faithfully Tietjens is modelled upon Arthur Marwood we cannot know, and it does not matter. He is, with his omniscience and his strange suggestion of being a Christ, one of the most unusual figures in recent fiction, and at the same time one of the most credible. Sylvia, quite as far removed from the commonplace in life and literature, is equally real. None of the other characters—Valentine, Duchemin, Macmaster, Campion, Mark Tietjens—is ordinary and none is implausible. These strongly individualized characters Ford takes and marshals into such amazing scenes as the Duchemin breakfast, the celebration of the Armistice in Tietjens's room, or the descent of Sylvia upon the Tietjens ménage the day Mark dies. Only a strong grasp of structural principles could control such inventiveness as Ford displays in these works.

The style in which the tetralogy is written is a kind of diluted stream-of-consciousness method, a report in indirect discourse of the thoughts and impressions of the various characters. At times the method becomes a little monotonous, and there are moments, especially in *The Last Post*, when the reader feels that Ford can go on in this way indefinitely and fears that he has taken it into his head to do so. On the whole, however, the method serves to reveal precisely those mental states that it is necessary for the reader to understand in order to catch the dramatic values of the climactic situations. Like Conrad, Ford takes the reader forward and backward, hither and yon, but in the end the reader finds that he has progressed to the goal the author has appointed for him.

If all four of the Tietjens books seem to have been a little hastily written, and if none of them attains to the formal perfection of *The Good Soldier*, their cumulative effect, the greater vitality of certain sections, the brilliance and especially the variety of character portrayal, and the intimations they offer of a changing social order, all demonstrate that Ford's creative powers have not weakened. They definitely show that he has a place in what he is fond of calling the main stream of European literature.

It is chiefly with the five novels just discussed that any attempt to evaluate Ford's work must be concerned. In thus limiting the Fordian canon we are following the method that would have to be pursued by the serious critic of Wells, Galsworthy, or Bennett; few of Ford's contemporaries have "extended" themselves in all their books. In these five books Ford reveals himself as the principal psychological novelist in England, the chief contemporary representative of the school of Henry James and Joseph Conrad. In the twentieth century the English novel has been predominantly in the Fielding tradition; the aim has been to give a cross-section of English life and the method has been biographical. In the latter decades of the nineteenth

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century James broke away from that tradition, occupying himself with situations rather than social orders and imitating the compact organization of the French novel instead of adopting the sprawling leisureliness of the English. James left few followers. His greatest disciple, Conrad, was so much more than a disciple that his indebtedness was obscured. Other novelists—Joyce, Mrs. Woolf, Miss Richardson, for example—triumphantly carried the novel into new fields and devised new methods. The characteristic Jamesian approach—as formulated, for example, in Percy Lubbock's *The Craft of Fiction*—has, for the most part, been neglected. Fortunately there has been Ford. He has not departed in any fundamental way from James's aims and methods, and yet he has done certain sorts of things that James could never have done and would not have attempted. Thus he has demonstrated the vitality of the Jamesian novel in our day.

It is, among other things including the temperamental eccentricities to which I have alluded, the distance that separates Ford from his contemporaries that has led to his comparative neglect. His books have neither the sociological interest of the novels of Wells and his associates nor the experimental interest of the works of James and his followers. However, as the sociological novel continues to decline in favor, and as the experimental novel reveals its limitations, Ford's work may receive more attention. The past few years have brought an increased interest in problems of form, but there still exists, especially in the United States, an unhealthy dichotomy. For the most part we have life and passion on one side, with formal perfection and sound writing on the other. If one must choose between the two, one would, surely, prefer the strength of *Look Homeward, Angel* to the symmetry of *The Woman of Andros*. But the choice is unnecessary. Ford's work not only shows that formal excellence may be combined with vitality and vigor; it reminds us that the sole justification of formal excellence is its effect in enhancing the vitality of the work in question.

The burst of novelistic energy released by the publication of *Ulysses* seems, at the moment, to have been dissipated. Many of the more talented younger writers content themselves with sleek and plausible imitations of the successful novels of the last hundred years. As a result, almost the only novelists one can watch with any pretence of interest are the few radical experimenters. Dos Passos, for example, one studies eagerly—but also with a certain amount of trepidation. He may, of course, succeed; but even if he does, it will still be true that not many novelists are capable of such an enterprise as he has begun in *The 42nd Parallel* and that not all worthy subjects could be treated by such a method. It seems clear that there must be some kind of novel less amorphous and less fully exploited than the sociological novel, and at the same time less perilously difficult than the experimental novel, whether of the Joyce or the Dos Passos type. Perhaps the Jamesian novel offers the best solution of the dilemma. But the Jamesian novel, if it is to serve our purposes, must break away from the limitations of subject matter that James himself submitted to, and it must develop the ability to portray more aspects of human character than he was interested in. That it can transcend the original limits Ford has already demonstrated; he has shown that it has greater possibilities than James attempted to exploit; it remains for other novelists to indicate how great these possibilities are. No one can predict the course that the novel will take, but, at this moment of uncertainty, we can afford to neglect no method that offers promise for the future. It would at any time be a pleasure to call attention to the excellence of certain of Ford's books; at the present time there may also be some importance in indicating their possible significance for the development of the novel.

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OUR ANCESTORS AND THEIR BOOK BUSINESS

by Dorothea Lawrance Mann

Bookselling seems to have been one of the indigenous industries of this country. This was inevitable from the character of the people who settled the colonies. They were not a primitive people and they had most serious intentions. Large numbers of them had had to leave England because they could not get on with those in authority there. They had talked too much for their own good in England, but, for all that, they had not said nearly all that they wanted to say. They possessed a liking for controversy, and that is generally a taste which fosters books. Moreover in New England and in Pennsylvania, where printing and bookselling first developed, the colonists were intensely religious people. And religion has gone hand in hand with bookselling whether in ancient Egypt and Babylonia or in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. It is significant that the town of Boston had something like forty bookstores when New York had but one and the whole colony of Virginia could not boast a single bookstore. New York on the other hand quite early demonstrated its broadmindedness, for it gratefully received the printer William Bradford when the atmosphere of Philadelphia had become too unpeaceful for his comfort.

The first printing press was set up in Cambridge in 1640, ten years after the founding of Boston, but there is no reason to believe that books were not sold in Boston earlier than that. We are so used to the idea of the lonely Pilgrim on the shores of Plymouth, with the *Mayflower* carrying away from him the last link to the homeland, that we forget that the settlement of Boston was conducted in quite other fashion. Ships were plying back and forth constantly between England and the new town of Boston, and, though the voyage consumed from fifty to seventy days, that in no wise deterred the colonists who were flocking in large numbers to the Bay Colony. Very soon the people of Boston were trading with the mother country. The very ship which brought Anne Hutchinson and her large family brought also a hundred cattle for Winthrop. Both the Winthrops had great libraries and were constantly ordering books from England and from the book-fairs of Germany. Before the end of the seventeenth century a London bookseller had called Increase Mather's library the best sight he had seen in this country. The Bay colonists had to endure hardships because they were in a new and slightly settled country, but they proved a prosperous colony from the first. So long as there was both money and inclination to buy it is reasonable to assume that books were sold very early. Between 1645 and the time of the Great Fire in 1711 we know that Boston had thirty bookstores in that small section surrounding her Town House, as the Old State House was then called. In such a community books must have been sold even before there was a printer or a store devoted to their sale.

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The first book printed in Boston bore the imprint 1676, and was printed by John Foster, who assumed so important a position in the community that when he died a few years later many poems were written upon his death. A fitting tribute from an author to his printer! Foster's printing press was taken over after his death by Samuel Sewall, a bookseller, who later became Chief Justice of Massachusetts.

The conducting of a book business was a fairly simple matter for many years. For more than a century and a half all save the writing of the book was frequently done under one roof. The bookseller was also the publisher and was often in addition the printer. He usually was the binder as well. Rome could produce books cheaply because they employed slave labor. The early Boston booksellers had at least apprentices. The apprentices did probably have to work hard, or else we should not find so many advertisements in the newspapers for apprentices who have run away from their masters.

Though Boston was founded in piety it flourished by Yankee shrewdness and the booksellers were true Yankees. When a bookseller could announce that a consignment of books from London was expected by a certain ship, the mere announcement was sufficient to attract the public to his shop at the proper time. Moreover he could—and did—charge about what he pleased. He had to compete with the London market, but it took a long while to order a book from London and await its arrival by a sailing ship. It is probable that most persons paid the price asked if they really wanted the book. There is in the Boston Public Library a printed record of a charge made by an irate bookseller that two bookbinders had been accustomed to sell books at a profit of four hundred and fifty to five hundred percent. Doubtless in his anger he may have exaggerated somewhat, but it is safe to assert none the less that there existed a great range of prices. Until after the Revolution American printers had to compete with London printers, but after the Revolution, though English books were no more imported, the booksellers acquired another sharp practice. It was to be seventy-five years before international copyright was even seriously considered. In the meantime if a bookseller could get hold of an early copy of an English book he could reprint it himself and get out an edition for sale. No opprobrium attached to the practice and it was even customary for the bookseller to announce what he was intending to do "in the publick prints".

The bookseller had it pretty much his own way even with American authors. Authors acquired fame rather than money for most of their efforts. They were decidedly at the mercy of the bookseller. Even so distinguished a man as the Reverend Cotton Mather haunted his bookseller's shop with manuscripts which he hoped to have printed. There were not too many amusements permissible and books had not nearly the competition which they have today. A good many booksellers had "hawkers" whom they sent out through the country districts selling books. To be sure at one time the Assembly passed an Act Against Peddlars which threatened the Hawkers, but Cotton Mather notes in his diary that he must address the Assembly inasmuch as he feared that their act would interfere with selling works of piety (among them doubtless some of his own books!) about the country. An early copy of one of Boston's first newspapers records the death of one of these "hawkers" and the statement that he had left a considerable estate, which he had acquired by peddling books.

The government being piously inclined—as governmental bodies have a habit of being no matter what the private tastes of the members—was more or less of a nuisance to booksellers and printers. At one time in Massachusetts there was an act by which nothing could be printed which had not been passed by three appointed censors. Philadelphia

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seems to have been far from peaceably inclined toward its first printer, and there is little to choose in subject matter between the religious books of Massachusetts and those of Pennsylvania. Clearly a bookseller had to be careful what sort of books he kept in sight in his store. In 1682 Usher imported from London—according to his invoice—one hundred and sixty romances. Three years later he bought only six. If he could only have left on record why romances proved so unpopular in Massachusetts! The strong tendency to advertise only religious books or textbooks is not absolutely convincing. It is hard to believe that a community with a profound fondness for Lord Byron's work had ever wholly disapproved of romance. To be sure the vulgar ballads and songs which were so popular with the London populace never were sold here. None the less it is also possible that the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century booksellers may also have sold books which they felt it wiser not to advertise.

All the conditions of life in the colonies made the book business a different affair from what it is today. Up to the time of railroads the transporting of books between inland points cannot have been too simple a matter. The coast towns of Boston, New York and Philadelphia could easily order books from England, but the towns away from the seacoast and the ports had to depend very largely on what books they published themselves. It is surprising now to think of Worcester and Salem and Albany and Greenfield and Bristol and Carlisle as the book-publishing centers they once were. Their difficulty was not merely that it was hard for them to secure books from outside but that the sale of the books which they published was likely to be limited to their own communities. At best they could transport their books to the nearest large town, where they had to depend on the honesty of other booksellers who had reasons of their own for not pushing these books by outsiders. The first American book-fair came into existence as a project by which the booksellers of the various towns could get together and have a chance to dispose of the stock which they had failed to sell in their own communities.

Some of these smaller towns represented good book-buying publics, once they were given an opportunity. John Dunton, the London bookseller, opened a temporary store in Salem during the six months he was in Boston in 1686, and put his assistant Samuel Palmer, there to sell books. Palmer, who had also sold books for him in Connecticut, disposed of the entire lot of books he took with him to Salem. Mr. Epes, whom Dunton refers to as the most eminent schoolmaster in New England, ordered two hundred pounds' worth of books from Palmer.

It behooved the booksellers to keep on the good side of the clergy for the clergy was one of the great advertising mediums. Not only did they buy books themselves, but they wrote many letters to their colleagues in various parts of the country and frequently mentioned and recommended books in their letters, so that these letters became a foremost means of bringing the knowledge of new books to other communities.

Booksellers usually had sidelines. From the beginning of things they had also been stationers, and being stationers meant not merely selling paper and ink, but such things as penknives and scissors and razors. We think of many privations occasioned by a war, but in 1775 Salem suffered because the book stores were all out of writing paper. Most bookstores in the early days were also lottery offices. It was by no means unusual to find lottery tickets advertised along with Bibles and Testaments. Another sideline of the early bookstores was that of patent medicines. A good many drugstores today carry some books as a sideline, but a hundred years ago bookstores were advertising everything from panaceas to corn plasters and beauty lotions. Many stores also had circulating libraries and some of these libraries were by no

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means small affairs. Salem had a circulating library containing eight thousand volumes, while in the middle of the eighteenth century one circulating library in Boston had a full-page advertisement in a newspaper.

Even in the seventeenth century, bookstores in Boston assumed an important aspect in the social life of the town. Neither the clergy nor the women could use the taverns as meeting places. Consequently the bookstores became the clubs of the clergy and of the women of Boston. Two centuries before the Old Corner Book Store was to be able to boast that everyone of importance in Boston passed through it in a day, the Boston bookstores had a firm place in the community life.

The early booksellers did a surprising amount of advertising. Of course they were also the publishers, but a far larger proportion of the advertising space of a newspaper was devoted to books a hundred years ago in Boston than now. Nothing so far has come to light about the costs of this advertising. Much of it appears dull to us today, accustomed as we are to a different type of advertisement. Nor should we expect to see sermons and spelling books and arithmetics taking precedence over novels or biography. The booksellers recognized the advantage of a personal recommendation for a book as clearly as publishers recognize it in our time. Their prices do not differ so greatly from modern prices. To be sure, nothing of importance can be ascertained about prices unless we discuss them in the light of the purchasing price of the dollar. While we have a list of prices for 1814 which sound very much like prices today, we are bound to consider that 1814 represented the peak of high prices from 1800 to the present day. They even exceeded the prices of 1920.

What is most noticeable of all about the old booksellers was their shrewdness and the variety of their methods. There was comparatively little they could learn from booksellers of the present day. When we find them talking discounts we realize that though religion may have been the reason for the immediate prominence of the book business in America, it never prevented the booksellers from driving a good bargain.

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JAMES JOYCE IN TRIESTE

by Silvio Benco

RATHER changed, Joyce," says my wife who has just visited the writer in Paris. "He's getting younger, and has become altogether a man of the world. In his house, as always, music reigns: his daughter dances and has even performed in public; his young son is training his baritone voice; the whole family is always ready to pick up and follow the wanderings of a famous Polish singer whom Joyce admires. And by way of contrast, the Triestine dialect is the family's customary language (the two children were born and raised in Trieste). They all speak our dialect, taking pleasure in preserving the harshness of the local accent. It's a strange thing, that luxurious Parisian apartment full of the speech of Trieste's slums. Unfortunately I had lost Joyce's address, and foreign celebrities are not widely known in Paris. In one of the larger bookshops, however, I found a man who knew the address. 'This is not one of the duties of my profession; it's just my own personal knowledge,' he insisted on informing me, pompously. So I was able to see Joyce in his new affluence and youthfulness; but also, alas, with his eyes so much worse that he cannot see to write and has to dictate everything. Seven times, since his years in Zürich until now, those eyes have been operated upon without any appreciable improvement; now he is about to undertake a decisive treatment from which they expect results. Meanwhile, at all hours and in every room, there are admirers and disciples of 'The Master', young Englishmen, who read for him, take down his dictation and pound typewriters for him. Joyce's work literally pervades the whole house. That new work of his which will take seven years of his life, like *Ulysses*, and of which the first and some of the last parts are already published; the middle chapters are still in gestation. He doesn't allow the state of his eyes to defeat him; he overcomes the bitterness of it bravely, and merely seems slightly distant and distrait in his ever-penetrating and sarcastic conversation. He recalls one by one the many Triestines to whom he taught English; he remembers certain streets of the city, his beloved streets of the Città Vecchia, with their wine-shops and cheap restaurants which probably don't exist any longer; he shows emotion at the name of Svevo, and is distressed that a man of such worth should have died so early. He jumps from one subject to another, sandwiching in anecdotes in his favorite fable form. He is delighted by the first Japanese translation of one of his books—I don't remember which one. The only thing, he says, which no longer interests him at all is politics. 'No one bothers with politics anyway,' he adds. 'It's no longer in style.' "

Now in place of my wife's recent impressions, I substitute myself with my more distant memories. I have to return almost to my youth: when people in Trieste began to

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talk of a newcomer who was a marvel at teaching English. Joyce, when he arrived in Trieste, was little over twenty, and Pola had been the first stop in a wedding-trip which was also a search for a means of making a living. A young Irishman, refined and moulded by the Jesuits until he had broken away from them, and an exceedingly young wife with a great love and courage behind her admiring eyes, cannot live on air. At Pola they found a young Florentine, Professor Alessandro Francini-Bruni, and his young wife, hesitating before the same problem. The Berlitz school had called them, and for the moment saved all four of them. Joyce taught English, and Francini the official Tuscan, somewhat different from the Italian in which Joyce was beginning to express himself. "At that time he spoke a rather odd Italian," says Francini, "an Italian covered with wounds and scabs. It was, in fact, a dead language, come to join the babel of living tongues." After a year, the two friends came to Trieste, still with the Berlitz School; but very soon the Business School took Joyce from that humble chair, and then his fame began.

The fame of an English teacher, let it be understood. For he kept the poems which he sent from time to time to Dublin reviews a secret; nor did the Triestines have occasion to know the little book called *Chamber Music*. Joyce was already a name in his forsaken country; but in Trieste he never appeared as a writer, and perhaps he found pleasure in keeping everyone in ignorance. There was no need for everyone to hunt down in him the already lived, if not yet relived, existence of Stephen Dedalus. Better to be the conscientious and successful teacher who accepted exile. Tall, thin, smooth-shaven (a member of the giraffe family, he used to say) he might have seemed (and without so much contradicting the facts) an overgrown schoolboy who had developed too rapidly. Except that no one would have taken James Joyce for an overgrown boy, so vivid was the impression of a mature, already decided life in his stiff, automaton-like bearing. He enjoyed spending his evenings drinking, says Francini; I know nothing about that, but he must have been still, secretly, something of a *révolté*. Those tumultuous emotions characteristic of the Irish, even when drowned in whisky or wine, were not noticeable to us, who admired in his athletic gait the machine's perfect response to the exigencies of his peripatetic profession. He was always hastening from house to house to give their hour of English to all the Triestines. Energetic and punctual in his work, devoted to his wife, his children, and his house, he was remarkable for his sobriety. But within there was the poetic torment, the keen critical mind, the paradoxical *diablerie* of Joyce. His friend Francini was perhaps the only one to know it in the beginning, and after the war he recalled it in a delightful, but today rather rare, book with the ugly title: *Joyce intimo spogliato in piazza.*

But there was one moment at which Joyce the writer was almost discovered in Trieste. Roberto Prezioso, then editor of the *Piccolo*, one of the few who had come to know the Irishman well, asked me to go over the Italian of some articles on Ireland which Joyce had brought him. It is to this task that I owe my personal acquaintance with him. He wanted the revision to take place under his own eyes; I do not think it was from distrust so much as from a desire to learn. In fact, there was very little to change in the articles. The Italian was a bit hard and cautious, but lacked neither precision nor expressiveness. "Do you write in English and then translate?" I asked him. "No, I write directly in Italian." He had begun to study it three years before, and our language has remained one of the most familiar among the eighteen ancient and modern tongues from which he gradually constructed his linguistic treasure. He knew ancient and modern Greek, Sanskrit, Arabic, all the major languages of Europe, and he was

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constantly making rare additions to this collection.

My collaboration did not last long. The day we argued about a word and he was right, with his dictionary in his hand, it became clear to me that his manuscripts no longer needed my corrections. Moreover there were very few of them. Three in that year, 1907, and then a couple more at long intervals.

At that time Joyce did not believe that politics were out of style. He had brought with him from Ireland a passionate interest in the subject: indeed he had the bitterness of disillusion, the intolerance of a persecuted man and the bravado of a sceptic ("Constitutional and unconstitutional monarchies make me sick," he once said to Francini. "Republics, aristocratic or democratic, make me sick. Can we want a monarchy through divine right? Do you believe in the sun of the future?"). Nevertheless, the evocation of his native country, guilty of having disillusioned him, never took place without causing him anguish. The first of those articles, "The Last of the Sinn Fein", spoke of a certain John O'Leary, killed in Dublin on St. Patrick's day. It explained that in Sinn Fein there was a double struggle: the Irish nation against the English government; and also the "physical force" party against the moderate party. Now Sinn Fein was either dying or dead. Its psychological moment had passed. "In Ireland at the psychological moment the traitor always appears." (A remark which comes up again in *Ulysses*: "the Irish always betray their best men".)

The second of the articles in *Il Piccolo della Sera* was entitled "Home Rule Come of Age". It recalled the applause given to Gladstone, in 1886, when the aged statesman had declared that the English liberal party would refuse to legislate for England until England had granted some measure of autonomy to Ireland. After more than seven years, Gladstone—"in the meantime having, with the aid of the Irish bishops, brought about the assassination of Parnell"—for the third time presented his plan to the House. Now, since twenty-one years had passed, Home Rule would have been of age. Instead Gladstone was dead, Irish parliamentarism had failed, and everything was at a standstill. Gladstone had done more harm to Ireland than Disraeli had. He had, always with the aid of the bishops, swamped it.

A few months later, a third burst of pessimism: "Ireland at the Bar". Let us read that beginning as a clue to the ancient tribe from which the author springs:

> Several months ago a sensational trial was held in Ireland. In the western province, in a desert place called Maamtrasma, a slaughter had been committed. Four or five farmers of the district belonging to the tribe of Joyce were arrested. The oldest of them . . . was particularly suspect to the police. Public opinion judged him innocent then, and now, considers him a martyr. The old man and all the others accused knew no English. The Court had to have recourse to an interpreter. The examination carried on through him partook at times of the comic, at times of the tragic. On one side stood the over-formal interpreter, and on the other the patriarch of the poor tribe, who, unaccustomed to civil procedure, seemed stunned by all that judicial ceremony.

The figure of this old man, "relic of a civilization not ours, deaf and dumb before his judge", seemed to Joyce to symbolize Ireland at the bar of public opinion. "She does not succeed in making herself understood; she has no means of communicating with the public opinion of England and of other countries. The Irish are alleged cut-throats. The true sovereign of Ireland, the Pope, looks upon them as the English do."

Later they did manage to make themselves understood, but Joyce was not obliged to be a prophet.

He could not suffer in the same way over Trieste's own dogged effort towards national freedom. But precisely because he was not passionately and painfully involved, he could

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consider it with intelligent sympathy. His feeling for Italy was very strong; but his knowledge of Italian literature was incomplete. To Francini he confided these summary opinions: "Italian literature begins and ends with Dante. But that is a great deal. In Dante the whole spirit of the Renaissance is to be found. I love Dante almost as much as the Bible. The rest is ballast". He had instinctively found his point of affinity, and he was right; but his hasty judgment of the rest was only one of those opinions which one hears on any literature from superficial intellects. Nor did he like Rome. Only the Roman Church seemed great to him; but great with a sort of mixed grandeur, composed of good and evil—the idea which most foreigners draw from their hyper-romantic concept of the Renaissance papacy. Concerning Italy we have nothing to learn from Joyce.

He often went to the theatre, and considered the Italians the first actors and singers of the world; he used to read the dramatic criticism of Giovanni Pozza in the *Corriere* and found him clear and acute (later he also praised those of Renato Simoni). He showed an interest in several musicians of Trieste. But he did not talk of his own literary work except with Svevo, much older than he and already "an overlooked local writer", and Doctor Prezioso, to whom he had read in manuscript the stories which later made up the volume of *Dubliners*. He spoke of this book with much enthusiasm, and promised me a great surprise when it was published. *Dubliners* appeared just as the World War broke out. I did not read it at that time; I did not even know of its publication, for books could not get through to Trieste.

I had the feeling—so difficult is it to penetrate the cold exterior of the Nordic mind—that I had not made a favorable impression on Joyce. I knew that he had found much to laugh at in my youthful novels, though they were written in earnest. I did not hold that against him; but I feared that there had remained, instead of indifference, a sort of antipathy to their author. Later I was convinced that this was not true, and Joyce, who is fundamentally loyal, always treated me as a friend. He himself, perhaps, imagined that I had not seen the genius in him. In that case, he was wrong. Though I was far from guessing the tremendous equation between encyclopedia and life which the author of *Ulysses* carried about in his head.

With the declaration of war, James Joyce became a free prisoner in Trieste, a citizen of an enemy state in the hands of Austria. He had been obliged to cease teaching in the Commercial Academy. Even his private lessons probably stopped. For some time he had been saying that he had taught everyone English, and would have to move to another city; but he was deeply attached to Trieste. At first the war must have completely upset him, given him that feeling of losing one's bearings which so many "intellectuals" experienced. One would meet him in the street walking, with his hasty step, but lost in meditation, his lips tight together in a hard, horizontal line. He would bow and look at one fixedly, and avoided stopping or exchanging a few words. The official position of the Irishman at war with England was now that of a British citizen at war with Austria. It was not easy to accept and less easy to deny.

And the war: did he feel that great problem which weighed on every conscience? Had he already written, in the already begun *Ulysses*, the famous sentence: "History is a nightmare from which I am trying to awaken"?

After a short time, Joyce disappeared from the city. He had got permission to go to Switzerland. At Trieste with the Italian struggle coming ever closer, the imperial authorities were not eager to have the custody of citizens of enemy states. Joyce went to Zürich; and like the man he was, or as I judge him always to have been rooted in his own intention, he held close to his artistic creations and paid attention to nothing else. Marvellous things were happening to him.

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The success of *Dubliners*, at a distance; the princely price paid in America for the manuscript, and even for the proof sheets, of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*; complete material ease for today and tomorrow; final independence earned by the work of the mind. He was in good humor (so says my friend Antonio Battara who was his companion in his Swiss exile), and delightful hours were passed in reading his aphorisms and paradoxes. He spent much time in bed, writing *Ulysses*; often he mixed with the other Irish exiles, and helped them to found a company of "Irish Players", which, having improvised a theatre, gave his comedy, *Exiles*. Even the writer's wife sometimes acted —and acted very well. As a diversion, he had occasional stormy scenes with the British consul. Perhaps one of them concerned that episode of *Ulysses* which, sent in manuscript to England, was so incomprehensible to the censors as to be judged a document in cipher; and only after some delay were they persuaded that they had to do with a "type of literature as yet unknown". Slight troubles. The most serious was the ocular illness from which Joyce began to suffer seriously.

Some echoes of all this reached me in my place of exile, by way of Zürich and Monaco newspapers. Joyce had decidedly become a famous man. One day I received an unexpected visit from his brother, Stan Joyce. I was stationed at Linz on the Danube and he in the neighboring camp of Katzenau, and one free day he came to bring me his brother's greetings. Thus I had more precise news of the fabulous growth of his fame; Stan Joyce told me that the English had been struck by a sort of classic conciseness in his brother's prose, and by a musical sentence-structure new to their literature. Though not a literary man, he was intelligent and the opposite of a snob; and the news he brought was precious to me. On his second visit, he brought me *Dubliners*. And I made the acquaintance of the youthful Joyce: portrayer of living men, conscious perfecter of his own style, neither less realistic nor less analytic than the majority of prose writers of his generation, penetrating observer and, more than dispassionate, capable of giving the proper perspective to his own emotion.

On my return to Trieste in the spring of 1918, I found *Exiles* and a little later *A Portrait of the Artist* came from Zürich. In the comedy I at once recognized the Ibsenian inspiration (Ibsen, the great love of Joyce's youth), but cruelly developed, somewhat in the manner of Strindberg, according to the natural law of the destruction of the soul when it is exposed to fire. Perhaps Strindberg would have ended with the bursting into flame; Joyce ironically viewed the complete destruction. In the *Portrait* I was struck by the precision and extreme lucidity of the draughtsmanship, the "resemblance" to its original revealed through the logic of its structure. It is too terse, too rigidly fresh and intellectually exact to be a favorite book with Italians.

One day in 1919 the author of *Ulysses* appeared suddenly and unexpectedly. I was then editing a newspaper in Trieste. He seemed to be showing signs of age, almost to be worn out, but that was not true. His tall and exceedingly thin figure was covered by one of those monastic habits with military belts which were being used as overcoats. It was too short for him and gave him rather strange proportions. After a few minutes he asked me to lower the lampshade, since the direct light hurt his eyes. And then we talked of his weakened sight, of Trieste, where he hoped to settle for good, of the chaotic times which had not, however, shaken his imperturbability, of the Danish language which he was studying, of the pronunciation of ancient and modern Greek, of Homer and of *Ulysses*.

That evening I got a general idea of the work, not sufficient however to give me even a vague conception of its real value. My measure of Joyce was still in the *Portrait of the Artist*: my expectations were naturally

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modelled on that criterion. But after a few more visits (no longer busy with his lessons, Joyce often came to my office), my curiosity increased until it was at its height. Then the magic talisman of *Ulysses* was revealed to me, the key to its secret, which all can now readily find in Stuart Gilbert's volume, that excellent commentary which, with the aid of the author himself, interprets every phase of James Joyce's novel.

After that initiation, he wanted me to read what was already written of *Ulysses*. He brought me the numbers of *The Little Review* in which about a third of the work had appeared: the loud objections to its "obscenity" had forced the publication to cease. The following episodes were then simply typed, and five of them were still unfinished. He showed me the loose sheets on which he prepared the material of each episode, notes as to composition, quotations, references, ideas, essays in various styles. When the rough material was ready, he devoted himself to writing out the complete episode, and this he usually did in less than a month. Following this method, *Ulysses* had been begun in Trieste before the war, continued in Zürich, and now resumed in Trieste.

One might easily imagine that Joyce himself had experienced some of the life of Stephen Dedalus of Bloom. Many times during that last year of his life in Trieste, he offered to take me with him to one of those old inns of Città Vecchia which he loved so much, to spend the evening chatting, smoking, and drinking—as indeed poets and philosophers have always enjoyed doing. Though the temptation was very strong, I was obliged to point out to him that the editor of a newspaper could not allow himself to desert his post in such troubled times. Joyce had a passion for white Chianti and Tuscan cooking, and he often liked to dine at Francini's and stay there until very late. Francini, an officer in the Army, had got himself assigned to an apartment on the fourth floor of the building in which I live. There Joyce went almost every week with his whole family, and generally some time after midnight, while reading in bed, I would hear the hushed conversation of the group as they descended the stairs, and Joyce's heavy step, for he did not trust his eyes in the candle's flickering light. One evening I accepted their offer to join them.

It was a very gay evening, although Nordic gaiety is not usually so demonstrative as that of our intimate Italian gatherings. But Francini saw to that. Joyce was accompanied by his wife, whose sleek blond beauty is expressed in a motionless countenance of almost Greek regularity. They had with them their almost fully grown children; for there is no family more closely united than that one. Joyce said a world of good of Linati, with whom he had corresponded; and he praised the writers who were his friends, Wyndham Lewis, the poet Ezra Pound, and some others, urging me to read their books. After dinner, pushing his chair back from the table, he began to sing—a habit since his earliest youth, when he thought he would devote himself to music and become one of the many famous Irish tenors. He sang church music. And seemed lost in his own singing. The author of *Ulysses*!

That was one of the last times I saw him. His Triestine days were drawing to a close. He was temporarily lodged at his brother's; everyone was uncomfortable, and it seemed as if there was not a single apartment in Trieste for James Joyce. Strange times indeed! He was annoyed at this, for it seemed to him that he could live happily only in Trieste. But one day he admitted his defeat, or else he felt obliged to follow the beckoning of Fate: and he went off to Paris.

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VOLUME ONE, NUMBER ONE

by Elmer Ellsworth, Jr.

THE part of my library I like most is a lot of old magazines. It is scarcely a distinguished library. Somehow my several years in rare book stores failed to make me a real collector. Instead of developing a desire for a valuable hoard of Samuel Johnson, incunabula or Americana, my taste went scooting sidewise, without economic reason, after the curious. And very often curious books are valueless.

This alone would tell me that I am no bibliophile if a glance at my shelves did not. Probably the most valuable item is: DEI/DELITTI E DELLE PENE/DI/CESARE BECCARI COL COMMENTARIO/SCRITTO/DAL SIG. DI VOLTAIRE./LIVORNO/Dai torchj di GLANCO MASI/1821—a poor excuse for a rarity, even with the fine copper frontispiece disclosing a headsman with his garner of three polls. There is a first edition of *The Master of Ballantrae*, but its condition is poor, and I esteem it not at all. The oldest book is a re-bound Greek Testament, London, 1643.

Small fry; the kind we would all throw back if we caught a couple large enough for breakfast. No, it is not a collector's lot, nor yet the library of a scholar. It is a catholic, heterogeneous, motley collection of a scant thousand bound titles—and a pile of old magazines.

It is the magazines I like best. I have grieved at the loss of Irving's *Alhambra*, the one with a Pennell illustration on nearly every page. I have cursed myself for parting with a genuine first of *Sister Carrie*. I have sought for years to duplicate *Through the Subarctic Forest* by Warburton Pike and *The Ape, the Idiot and Other People* by W. C. Morrow. But of all the books I have once owned and allowed to fall into other hands, two cause the roundest and most glistening tears. They were magazines. They were the first volume of Gelett Burgess's *Lark* and a complete *Kyote* as it was published in Lincoln, Nebraska.

So far as I can learn, collecting the first issues of magazines, Vol. 1, No. 1, is the sole original idea in my plagiaristic life. No one else, it seems, has thought of it, least of all book dealers. Thus a very limited demand finds no supply at all.

"No," the salesman says with a pitying, tolerant, benign smile. "No, we don't handle magazines."

And I swallow my rage and attempt to explain that I am not seeking the current *Popular Mechanics* nor even *True Story*; that I want odd and curious magazines, old and forgotten ventures in publishing. *"Chap-Book,"* I say. "*Boston Miscellany,* little, curious magazines—any language—any date—"

"We have only rare books."

"But you know the sort of thing I want? *Early* magazines," I plead. Yes, he understands, but he hasn't any. The extent of my purse hampers my collection less than the lack of opportunity to spend. The items I have gathered represent more diligence and

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manual labor than cash, yet I prize them highly. Scanty as the collection is, and valueless by the standards of Dr. Rosenbach or Maggs Brothers, it has more intrinsic interest, page for page, than any like number of titles I have ever seen assembled.

H. L. Mencken once wrote an article suggesting the assembling of juvenile religious tracts which were among the principle products of the early American printers. He predicted that one day these tiny books with their two title pages, one of them lithographed—usually in two or three colors and gold, always gold—would bring fancy prices.

But the similarity of the contents and even make-up of these tracts is almost certain to pall. I recommend, instead, collecting Volume One, Number Ones. Your heartiest guffaw at the rules for young ladies' conduct in 1803 wears thin and thinner upon its fortieth repetition, but your surprise at the popular knowledge disseminated by the first few copies of *The American Magazine* can continue for years unabated.

I think I have never encountered better

advice, more delicately worded than in this paragraph from Vol. 1, No. 1, of *The American Magazine*, September, 1834:

ILL EFFECTS OF THE CRAVAT

Wearing the cravat too tightly tied, induces distressing, and frequently very constant pain of both the head and eyes. During exertion of the body, it would be well to loosen it; and also, when engaged in profound study, writing, reading, &c. The body ought, in retiring to rest, to be divested of all ligatures. Evils of great magnitude have arisen from a neglect of these precautions.

But, as I have indicated, a ready purse will not buy you a collection of magazines. For the most interesting items you will have to *look*. Often I have been referred to a basement, piled high with what looked like debris. These heaps are the residue from many libraries; pamphlets, wrappers, memorial tributes, magazines, "paper-novels", "acts", speeches, maps, cheap school classics and plays. The pile will be sorted some day, and the sale of a single pamphlet may pay the dealer for his time. Here are rare slavery tracts, debates on the practicality of digging now famous canals or of building now prosperous railroads. And between the *Nick Carters* and "Acts to Amend" other "Acts" I have found many Volume One, Number Ones.

The dealer's thumb runs down the table of contents in search of well-known names. Let him find Mark Twain or Edgar Allan Poe or even Theodore Roosevelt, and the price is quadrupled. But four times twenty-five cents is, after all, but a dollar. Some few dealers attach a greater value to the first copies of certain magazines, but the covers get worn and soiled, often detached—they make poor stock. There are a few, however, which bring a premium, even among fairly recent and still current magazines. The good fathers of *The American Mercury* and *The Golden Book* both underestimated the demand and neither publisher can supply complete sets

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of his magazine. There are standing offers in many places of from five to seven and a half dollars for good copies of the first number of either. My copies came to me at the regular newsstand price, on the day of issue. Your dealer in *Alice* manuscripts and Gutenberg Bibles is welcome to his chilly pinnacle; here, on any street corner, was the opportunity to acquire an entertaining rarity which increased two thousand per cent in market value within a year. The knowledge that one has been astute enough to buy and hold these objects breeds the same inward glow of satisfaction that attends transactions on a more magnificent scale.

Every old bookstore has a stock of bound volumes of *Harper's*, *Century*, *Living Age* and *Atlantic*. The standard price is fifty cents a volume, even for Volume One. All of them are staples to the magazine collector, like Catlin's *Indians* to the Americana lover or *Anacalypsis* to the anthropologist. The gnat which mars perfect enjoyment in their bound format is the absence of advertising and covers.

The advertisements in the older magazines are rarely less amusing than the editorials. The novelty of finding whisky and wines listed soon wears off, but such fun as this from Vol. 1, No. 1, of *The Yellow Kid*, March 20, 1897, is more nearly permanent:

IF YOU WANT A BICYCLE

You want the BEST *there is.*

It doesn't pay to buy a bicycle whose guarantee is unidentified with responsibility simply because it is cheap. There is wise economy in every dollar that the Columbia costs.

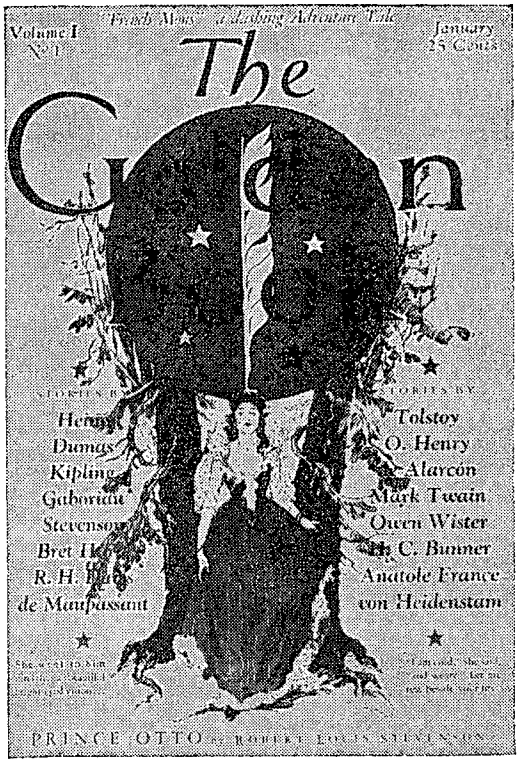
COLUMBIA BICYCLES
standard of the World
$100 *To All Alike*

Hartford Bicycles, Second only to Columbias, $75, $60, $50, $45.

Pope Mfg. Co., Hartford, Conn.

Catalogue free from dealers or by mail for one 2-cent stamp.

(COMPLETE MODEL OF THE GREAT COLUMBIA FACTORIES, lithographed in



colors, ready to be cut out and built up, affording unlimited amusement and instruction to old and young, sent by mail on receipt of five 2-cent stamps.)

From *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* comes this priceless contribution:

THE QUESTION, "IS MARRIAGE A FAILURE," SETTLED AT LAST.

"You see it works this way," said a plump, rosy-cheeked little wife to a friend of ours the other day. "When I used to sort o' scold Harry in a verbal form for coming home late at night or for not remembering my little commissions and requests during the day, he would grow nervous and irritable and perhaps say something ugly back at me. Then, possibly, I'd retort with more force than I really meant, which only made a bad matter worse. So on reflection, I decided to put all my little 'curtain lectures' on paper. To do this speedily, I procured a MERRITT Typewriter, costing only $15.00 complete. Now I use fewer words than formerly, say exactly what I want to and say it in a cool,

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dispassionate, pleasant style, inclose it in an envelope and hand it to Harry with a kiss as he is departing for his office. Of course he reads it at his leisure, it serves as a gentle reminder to his memory, and if he wants to scold back, you know I'm not present to hear, and he knows that, too. Then he thinks of the kiss I gave him as we parted and he knows I love him, and the result is, all my reasonable requests are granted. No, indeed, marriage is not a failure in our home!"

MORAL—Let all husbands and wives provide themselves with the MERRITT Typewriter and do all their scolding and fault finding in printed letters addressed to each other and see if married life is not a success. No slips of the unruly tongue then.

Sent To Any Address On Receipt of $15

LYON MANUFACTURING CO.,
59 Fifth Avenue, New York City.
Sole Agents.

But most of the magazines in my collection were founded by writers, not business men, and they cared nothing for the revenues of advertising space. They started magazines, just as you and I have so often planned to do, for their own satisfaction. Who among us has not outlined a periodical of consummate beauty, dedicated to our favorite proposition, devoted to our best-loved hobby, printed with hand-set type of rare design on hand-laid, deckle-edged, all rag paper with generous margins, sewed so that it would open flat, incorporating the work of only the writers with whom we agree and, for illustrations, original, signed, India-proofs of etchings—tipped in?

This desire to create periodical bibelots of such merit that they shall be long esteemed seems ageless. In the United States in the nineties it became a frenzy. Magazines bloomed everywhere; Boston was littered with them; New York averaged a new one a month; San Francisco produced the picturesque *Lark* with its immortal "Purple Cow", by Gelett Burgess.

But the only one of these fad magazines which proved a financial success was Stone and Kimball's *Chap-Book*. Thomas Mosher's *Bibelot* sustained itself for a time, but only the *Chap-Book* actually made money over a period of years.

The most exciting of these small magazines is little known. So far as may be learned from the standard reference work on the subject, no library has a file. It was called *Paragraphs of Appreciation and Depreciation* and it was published by W. D. Forrest in Boston, monthly, for eleven months. It was the work of a single man and its flavor was decidedly bitter. I have often thought that some of its vitriol was worthy of H. L. Mencken. Its prejudices fit many of his very closely. In Vol. 1, No. 1, we find:

Benjamin Harrison, the man who was President during Wanamaker's administration, has been firing off the American flag. Listen to the eloquence of him: "I not only believe that the American flag should be hoisted on the top of every schoolhouse and on every public place, but it should be planted in the heart of every American citizen." How do you want it planted in the heart of every American citizen, Benjamin? Tied to a bayonet, I suppose.

This is, perhaps, the high spot in the first issue, striking the keynote of all that was to follow in the concluding ten numbers:

It remained for a Boston parson to take the prize, which, by the way, was a first prize. The dear old gentleman discovered that many Boston merchants did not have the curtains drawn on their store show-windows on Sunday. He felt sure that the reason for this was because the merchants wished to advertise their wares on Sunday as on other days. But the worst is to come. The same dear old gentleman also made the discovery that other merchants did have the window-curtains lowered, and he felt sure that this was because they wished to work inside without being seen. The remedy for this state of affairs is plain: pass a law to the effect that shop-window curtains be drawn on Sunday; then pass another law to the effect that they be not drawn. If the merchants do not conform to this send them to jail.

Forrest, or the man who wrote the little

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book, whatever his name, laid about him as lustily, if less artistically, as ever did the Baltimore sage.

Vol. 1, No. 1, of the *Chap-Book*, semi-monthly, Chicago, May 15, 1894, was printed in two colors on good laid stock. It was of convenient pocket size, illustrated in line, and it carried three and a half pages of advertising in addition to the Stone and Kimball announcements of new books. These "new" books were *The Ebb Tide* by Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson and Mr. Lloyd Osbourne, and the *Complete Writings* of Edgar Allan Poe, edited by Edmund Clarence Stedman, in ten volumes. There were no promises by the editor, no explanations of what the *Chap-Book* stood for, no definitions of policy.

The chief contributor was Bliss Carman, the frontispiece was by Charles G. D. Roberts and near the back of the number appeared a self-portrait of Aubrey Beardsley. Beardsley was the toast of the day, both here and in England, in ninety-five. The "decadents" were running things, and the rebellion against Victorianism was in full swing.

That first volume of *The Yellow Book* (An Illustrated Quarterly, April, 1894, Elkin Mathews and John Lane, London; Copeland and Day, Boston), contained so much material of moment that only a year or so ago it was reprinted, together with the subsequent numbers. The table of contents reads like a roster of the illustrious of the day. There were Henry James, Richard Le Gallienne, Max Beerbohm, William Watson, Arthur Symons, Henry Harland, Edmund Gosse, Hubert Crackanthorpe, George Moore; Beardsley, Joseph Pennell, Laurence Housman, Will Rothenstein and Walter Sickert. The book was bound in starched yellow cloth, 272 pp., of coated stock, with an advertising supplement of 18 pp., and a Mathews-Lane list of 15 more. The pages were uncut and the price was 5 shillings, net.

The effect of *The Yellow Book* upon magazine publishing continues today. Its originality and freedom of thought became almost a standard. It was aped everywhere. In Edinburgh, Patrick Geddes and a group of friends, designated on the title page as "colleagues", issued *The Evergreen*, a Northern Seasonal, Spring 1895, a large, square octavo volume bound in boards to which unpolished calf had been affixed. A mystic element almost Celtic pervades the entire book. Some of the contributions show the influence of William Blake or Hargrave Jennings. The only writers whose names remain familiar today are Fiona MacLeod and J. Arthur Thompson.

In January of 1895, Thomas B. Mosher of Portland, Maine, issued the first *Bibelot* "to bring together the posies of other men bound by the thread of one's own choosing".

> In this way those exotics of literature that might not immediately find a way to wider reading, are here reprinted, and so to speak, resown in fields their authors never knew.
>
> *The Bibelot* does not profess to exploit the new forces and ferment of *fin de siècle* writers; it offers the less accessible things that perish never,—lyrics from Blake, Villon's ballades, Latin Student songs,—Literature once possessed not easily forgotten of men.
>
> Besides this, to more widely extend the love of exquisite literary form, it must be shown by example that choice typography and inexpensiveness need not lie far apart. . . .

That first *Bibelot* contained twenty-four tiny pages, in a blue-gray laid cover, printed in red and black, and the typography was excellent. It contained more than a score of William Blake's lyrics.

But Vol. 1, No. 1, of *The Bibelot* is scarcely "rare". It was printed in a considerable quantity and fell into hands that retained it. The price was five cents. A few years ago Thomas Mosher's estate reprinted the entire magazine in answer to popular demand, and I think this reprint, a facsimile of the original volumes, is still available.

In 1925, Henry W. Lanier applied the Mosher idea of reprinting literary gems to a larger and more general magazine. There

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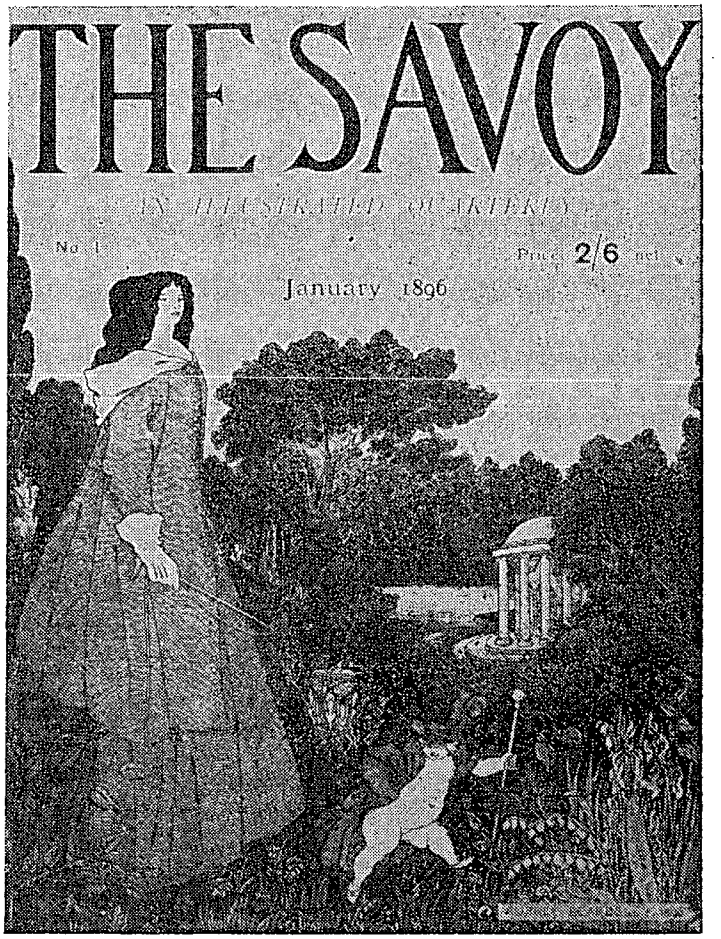
was no emphasis upon typography nor upon the "exotic" in letters. Announcements did pretend that the contents of *The Golden Book* would be somewhat esoteric, but this quality has never been noticeable. As I have said before, the first issue is now very scarce.

Aside from credit for copyrighted material there is little indication of the sources of the selections. In most cases it was the New York Public Library, but not in all. I should like very much to know where the short stories and poems were originally printed and who



The name, the editor says, was inspired by the *Libro D'Oro* of Venice, "the official list of the Venetian nobility, who alone could vote or hold office in that remarkable republic of aristocrats. . . .

"The names in this *Golden Book Magazine*, which starts with the present issue, will represent aristocrats of letters, an aristocracy not of birth, but of performance."

it was that dug them up. One new practice, adopted with the first number and continued until the present, is the reproduction of a facsimile signature of each of the important writers represented. In Vol. 1, No. 1, we have the A. L. S. of Verner von Heidenstam, Walter Malone, Pedro Antonio de Alarcon, O. Henry, Emile Gaboriau, Richard Harding Davis, Sir Thomas Wiat, Anatole France,

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Leo Tolstoy, Robert Louis Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling, Mark Twain, Owen Wister, Bret Harte, Guy de Maupassant, Heinrich Heine, Alexandre Dumas, Sir Richard F. Burton and Johannes Brahms. Your manuscript forger is thus given access to a wealth of material for his nefarious trade, but the readers of the magazine feel a touch of intimacy with the writers that is worth the risk of a flood of spurious autographs.

The Golden Book chose its illustrations as it did its text, from work already published. George du Maurier and A. B. Frost are represented in the first number. The popularity of the latter has increased amazingly since the first *Golden Book*. No one thought of collecting Frost a few years ago. I bought a copy of *Mr. Absalom Billingslea* for twenty-five cents and *Farming* for a dollar. Today I would not part with them for ten times that amount. Whether or not *The Golden Book* has been responsible for a revival of interest in the man's work I do not know, but certainly it has contributed. (*The Saturday Review of Literature* was guilty of this howler in commenting on A. B. Frost: "He was the author and illustrator of several books which had a wide vogue and were distinguished for the humor of their drawings. Among them were *Tom Sawyer*, *Uncle Remus* and the *Mr. Dooley* books".)

Back in the nineties, once again, we find the rarest of all rare magazines—a college paper that is readable to outsiders and possessed of sound merit besides. *The Lotus* was that paper. The sub-title was "Kansas-Intercollegiate" and it appeared first under the date of November 1, 1895. Price five cents. It aped the *Chap-Book* shamelessly in general make-up, even to paper, page lay-out and distribution of color, but its editor and his contributors thought for themselves.

Then Aubrey Beardsley and his book, vulgarly called *The Savoy*, began to startle a world which had not, until then—for a long time at any rate—been sex-conscious. The first number contained 170 pp., royal octavo, and four pages of advertising. The editor was Arthur Symons, and the contributors G. Bernard Shaw, Max Beerbohm, Ernest Dowson, Havelock Ellis and W. B. Yeats. In this number both Beardsley and Joseph Pennell appeared as writers as well as artists.

This is probably the most readable magazine in my collection, containing the first published version of "On Going to Church", a translation of a poem by Paul Verlaine and several references to Whistler by Joseph Pennell.

The collecting fad of eighteen-ninety-six was posters. From France the mania spread to Germany, England and the United States. Its influence upon young artists, especially illustrators and designers, was tremendous. The principles of the poster were applied to all advertising, however small. Headlines and text became part of the "design" and advertisements, for a while, became pegs for artists to hang their work upon. Claude Fayette Bragdon, Percival Pollard, later editor of the *Echo*, Will H. Bradley, Edward Penfield and Frank Hazenplug were among the many exponents of the poster in the United States. It was all the aftermath of the William Morris, Burne-Jones, Whistler-Wilde agitation of a few years before. Scroll-saws had fallen into absolute disfavor.

Way out in Kansas City, in January, 1896, Frederic Thoreau Singleton brought out Vol. 1, No. 1, of *Poster Lore*, "A Journal of Enthusiasm Devoted to the Appreciation of Modern Posters". Like many of its contemporaries it gave, as a premium with each issue, several large colored posters. *Poster Lore* was about the size of *The Bibelot*, but the unity of its interest was so absolute that only initiates could enjoy it.

I have mentioned but a few of the hundreds of crazy little periodicals that were abroad in the middle nineties. The thing to do at that time was start a magazine and everybody joined in the fun. Finally, Mr. James Marrion, of San Francisco was moved to a colorful protest. He started a burlesque

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Lark-Chap-Book-Yellow Book. It was a little difficult to outdo such worthies as Gelett Burgess and Walter Blackburn Harte, editor of *The Fly-Leaf*. It was nearly as impossible to burlesque a fad magazine in 1896 as it is to burlesque a "They laughed when I sat down at the piano" advertisement today—but Mr. Marrion achieved it. He printed it on wall paper, and he cut the wall paper on the bias. He used some of every type face he could assemble, and he illustrated the result with imitations of Beardsley and of Burgess's own invention, the "Goops". The name of the monstrosity was *Le Petit Journal des Refusées* and the price was 16 cts. "Number 1, Quarterly, Summer 1896", was published at 523 Market Street, San Francisco, California, by James Marrion, 2nd. The book beggars description; it is a scream from start to finish, even to the advertisement on the back cover which can be deciphered to read: *A Catchy "Ad" Will Turn a Dollar Quickly*, which slogan accompanies a very jolly sort of skeleton riding a bicycle around a crescent moon, the bicycle wheels being silver dollars. The "quarterly"—I am sure there was but this one issue—is offered on the title page for "16 cents a number, $16 a year". Each of the "contributions" is purported to have been rejected by several magazines.

The Dome, The Unicorn Press, London, a sort of self-conscious *Yellow Book*, issued its first number on Lady Day, 1897. It was a pretty little book, well illustrated and bound in stiff boards. From the beginning *The Dome* made much of its illustrations. Their variety invariably starts me comparing the reproductive methods employed by magazines since they were first illustrated. Each editor pointed with pride to his elegant pictures; each thought his cuts the last word in the presentment of works of art. Today, when we have but to direct a camera at an object to reproduce it in its full natural colors for "more than 2,000,000 circulation", the pride of those editors seems a little pitiable.

The Dome, Vol. 1, No. 1, contains a lithograph, several line cuts, presumably on zinc, of pen and ink drawings; half-tone photo-engravings of both pencil drawings and oil paintings, printed in several shades of brown ink on heavily calendered inserts, one with a gold ink, line-cut border; one photogravure of a charcoal landscape, surprinted on a rag card with the princely aid of a hand-etched plate and several reproductions of early copper engraving. This was the heyday of the photogravure, which had quickly stolen public favor from the "process" woodcut. It improved upon the original, giving paintings and drawings unearthly qualities their creators could not have imagined. My prejudice against this highly estimable invention is probably groundless. Nevertheless, I resent it.

The earliest item in my collection is *Waldie's Select Circulating Library*, a weekly first issued in Philadelphia, on the first Tuesday in January, 1833. Fifteen hundred copies were printed on cheap paper and distributed by mail to the "Atlantic cities". The scope of the paper was general, embracing fiction, travel, memories, literary criticism and announcements. Contributions to Volume 1 came from Sir Walter Scott, Dr. Burney, Miss Mitford, Robert Chambers, Andrew Picken, Allan Cunningham, Maria Edgeworth and many others. The three-column page measured nine by eleven and a half inches and there were no illustrations.

The next in point of age is the *American Magazine of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge*, Vol. 1, No. 1, September, 1834. Its illustrations were the crudest of woodcuts, representing birds, animals, scenes of wonder and delight and many natural curiosities. The text of this amazing periodical is devoted to "Hints to Married Women", notes on natural resources, "Peruvian Sepulchres", superstitions in the Canary Islands, "Clocks", "Chinese Barbers", and quotations from a score of contemporaneous sources. The selection upon the evils of the cravat, given earlier in this article, is typical of much of the contents.

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The illustrations of a few years later, in *Godey's, Sartains, Graham's, Ladies' Repository*, and their contemporaries, were much better. The woodcut had developed; steel engravings had become a part of each new venture. Colored plates of flowers, birds and ladies' and gentlemen's fashions were added features. This was the first use of color in magazine illustration in America. It preceded the first chromo-lithograph in this country by a decade or more, although Herr Senefelder, the inventor of printing from stone, says, in 1818, that the art "has penetrated as far as Philadelphia". There is no native record of that lithographic press. No one knows its owner or its work.

Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly came on the scene in January, 1876, with more than seventy-five woodcuts and a lithographed frontispiece. The woodcut had reached a stage in its history when it was signed proudly by the man who cut it as well as the artist, and effects that defy imitation were obtained by the masters of their craft. In this issue of *Leslie's* there are four scenes relating to Spanish gypsies, all by that acknowledged genius, Gustave Doré, all cut by a man who was himself an artist. It is doubtful if this was the first appearance of these pictures, since I have found some of the other woodcuts used before in foreign publications. On the other hand, I have found one of *Leslie's* woodcuts used five months later, without credit, in the *Sporting and Dramatic News* of London.

DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND

"Helen had become as pale as death, and stood staring at the guest in a manner that betokened more astonishment than delight."

The sharpest of contrasts to the pictures in these old magazines is afforded by Vol. 1, No. 1 of *The Sportsman*, (Concord, N. H.) January, 1927, with its four-color "process" cover designed by Guy Arnoux, and its one hundred and fifteen "150 screen" half-tones and score of line drawings. Between *Leslie's* and *The Sportsman* lies the whole history of photo-engraving. The perfection of the *camera obscura* and its application, first to the wood-block, then to metal, and the revolutionary invention of Ben Day may all be followed step by step through the periodicals that have been issued from year to year as each phase of the industry was perfected. It has often been a new means of reproducing pictures that started a magazine. If the perfection of fine-screen copper-half-tone engraving was not responsible for starting *National Geographic*, it has certainly been the cause of its continued success. Lithography gave birth to several periodicals in France, *La Caricature* and *Le Charivari*, if no more. It was one side-issue of this important growth which gave a waiting world *Liberty*, a Weekly Periodical for Everyone.

Early in 1924 *The Chicago Sunday Tribune* instituted a new system of color printing in its magazine section. It was a cross between offset color printing and rotogravure and the results were a sort of glorified comic supplement. Its producers were so

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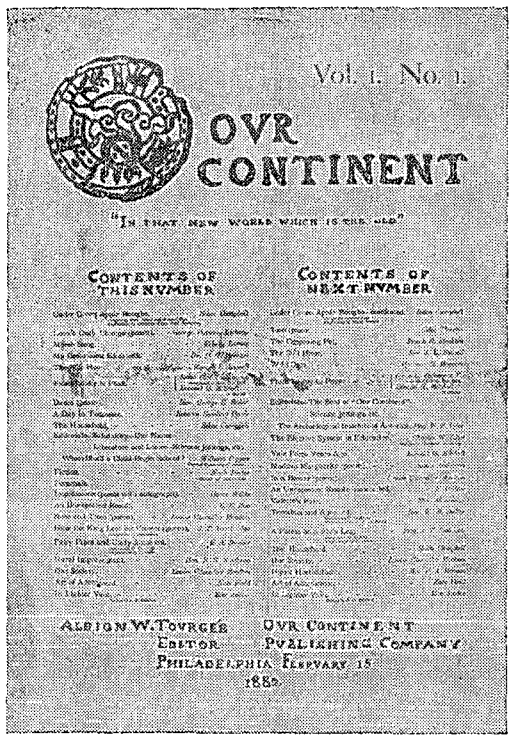
Vol. 1. No. 1.

OVR CONTINENT

"IN THAT NEW WORLD WHICH IS THE OLD"

CONTENTS OF THIS NVMBER

CONTENTS OF NEXT NVMBER

ALBION W. TOURGÉE EDITOR

OVR CONTINENT PVBLISHING COMPANY

PHILADELPHIA, FEBRVARY 15 1882

taken with the idea that a weekly magazine was projected and twenty thousand dollars offered for an appropriate name, and George A. Elwell, of Youngstown, Ohio, was astute enough to reach exactly the proper pitch of jingo embodied in the name *Liberty*.

Its first issue is dated May 10, 1924 and it contains a typical pronunciamento. It is illustrated with both narrative photographs and drawings, all reproduced in rotogravure. Charles Livingston Bull, America's premier animal draughtsman and several illustrators of *Red Book* and the *Post* were the artists. Lejàren Hiller (said to be the highest paid photographer in the world, save only Baron de Meyer) illustrated the feature story with his camera. I have no statistics regarding the cost of these photographs, but the stigma of *True Story* is too strong upon them to permit me to enjoy them. The cover was by John T. McCutcheon, as was fitting and proper. There were literary contributions from George Barr McCutcheon, Elsie Janis, Hudson Maxim, Albert Payson Terhune, Montague Glass and others.

Besides the illustrious already mentioned, I have Volume One, Number Ones containing contributions by Herbert Spencer, *Mind*, a Quarterly Review of Psychology and Philosophy, London, January, 1876; Horatio Alger, Jr., *Ballou's Dollar Monthly Magazine*, Boston, January, 1855; Washington Irving, *Literary Emporium*, New York, January, 1845; Samuel Merwin and Henry K. Webster, *Four O'Clock*, Chicago, February, 1897; George Ade, *Pickwick*, May, 1898; Katherine Mansfield and H. M. Tomlinson, *Adelphi*, London, June, 1923; Sherwood Anderson and Alfred Kreymborg, *Phantasmus*, Pittsburgh, May, 1924; Oscar Wilde, E. P. Roe, Sidney Lanier and Max Adeler, *Our Continent*, Philadelphia, February 15, 1882 and scores of modern writers in more recent publications.

The guiding lights of the *Four O'Clock*, which printed "His Mascot" by Samuel Merwin and "When All's Fair" by Henry K. Webster in its first issue, were Charles Fletcher Scott and Carl Werntz. Of Mr. Scott I know nothing. Carl Werntz is now the proprietor of The Chicago Academy of Fine Arts, an institution engaged in giving the most practical of instruction to painters, dress designers and commercial artists. The magazine contains many of Mr. Werntz's early illustrations; I imagine he has lived to regret most of them. The most unusual thing about the magazine was the "tipped-in" illustrations. Each picture was a proof of the cut, on white, coated stock. These were affixed to the wholly worthless paper of the book proper, between paragraphs of the text, on the margins and at the top and bottom of pages. Sometimes they covered several lines of text and to read the story or poem one had to lift the illustration gingerly by one corner to avoid tearing it out.

An advertisement on the second cover of the first number calls the public attention to an exhibit of black and white drawings by

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J. T. McCutcheon at the Chicago Art Institute. This was some time before the lure of a cartoonist's bed of roses tempted Mr. McCutcheon from the more rugged road of unapplied art—some years before he added to his fame and that of George Ade by his illustrations for *Fables in Slang*.

And while we are talking about *Fables in Slang* and their—or its—author, you should read "The Thompson 'Shivoree'" in the first number of *Pickwick*. You really should. The plot is concerned with an interrupted wedding, hinged upon a false tale of pre-engagement "hugging". *Pickwick* had a generally professional look which separates it from most of the little magazines of its day. Its campaign for subscribers was bolstered by the offer of such premiums as made-to-order shirt waists, an 1898 model bicycle, a Phoenix brass bed. It carried ten pages of advertising, including one offer of a fifty-cent copy of "On the Banks of the Wabash" by Dresser for 22c.

Its type—I do not know its name—must have been extremely radical in 1898. It is an uneven face, almost modern in its variety, with a tendency to form patterns on a page without losing a jot of legibility. I recommend its revival today for particular work where the famous old families of Bodoni, Cochin and Cheltenham will not do.

The Wave was another Chicago venture, of the latter-day attempt to revive that city as a center of art and letters. With Sherwood Anderson, Floyd Dell, Ben Hecht, Carl Sandburg and a dozen others frequenting the Loop itself; with Henry Kitchell Webster, Edgar Lee Masters, Edwin Balmer and Theodore Dreiser all in Cook County, the town had a right to look up. Vincent Starrett started it in January of 1922. His right-hand man was a Danish woodcut artist and printer named Steen Hinrichsen; his ace in the hole was a friendship and personal contact with Arthur Machen. In his first number he printed "The Marriage of Panurge", an unpublished manuscript of Machen's. Hinrichsen's illustrations were all splendid and much of the text was readable. In the initial announcement Mr. Starrett says: ". . . we shall print what pleases *us*, hoping that it will please *you*". It ran for but eight issues, over a period of nearly three years. The last was dated October, 1924, and it was printed in Copenhagen. Before the funeral, *The Wave* found time to print contributions from Maxwell Bodenheim, Carl Van Vechten, Louis Gilmore, Edgar Saltus, Oscar Wilde (a genuine first), Ben Hecht, Oscar Williams, Gene Markey, John McClure, Rudyard Kipling (also probably genuine), Witter Bynner, Llewellyn Jones, Harold Vinal and Pierre Loving.

Standing around, watching *The Wave's* artistic triumph and financial failure, was a group of young people who had tried the same thing a few months before, led by Sam Putnam. Their effort was called *Youth* and the first publication of some black and white drawings by Wallace Smith justified its existence. The appreciation of Smith's

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work by Ben Hecht in the first issue of *Youth* marked the begining of their friendship, which produced *Fantazius Mallare* and *The Chicago Literary Times*.

In Paris, April, 1927, Elliot Paul and Eugene Jolas started a journal for expatriates—and other incoherents, incomprehensibles and artists. It was printed in English but its authorship was international. James Joyce and Gertrude Stein were the principal contributors and there were poems and other esoteric arrangements of phrase by Ludwig Lewisohn, Virgil Geddes, Kay Boyle, Robert Sage and Mr. Paul. I was struck by the absence of Ezra Pound, and I almost wrote to ask him if sur-realism was beyond him—not that I imagine it is.

Poetry, edited by Harriet Monroe, started in 1912 and is still in existence. It never attempted to support itself. In its first issue it listed the sponsors who had made its existence possible. A gray, laid, deckle-edged paper covered those first thirty-four pages. It was designed by Ralph Seymour, printed in red and black. Inside, the type was not unusual, nor even very good, but it was arranged well and the subject matter was the best available. To list the important contributors to *Poetry* since that October were to write almost a history of American verse since Whitman.

The first, last and only issue of *The Literary Review and Book Plate Collector* was sent from the press of the Charles E. Peabody Company, Boston, in November, 1902. Chatty and intimate but entirely undistinguished.

Playboy was probably the best of all the radical efforts from that indefatigable city of magazine-makers which surrounds Washington Square. *The Village*, of course, is gone, but new Greenwich Village magazines are still fermenting in the minds of villagers everywhere and they always will be. There was Robert Edward's *Quill* which flourished longest of them all. There have been *Aesthete* (one number only—thank heaven—February, 1925), Guido Bruno's *Review*, and a hundred other journals of protest too numerous and insignificant to mention.

Playboy was the work of Egmont Arens, the moving spirit in almost all the Bohemian activities of New York, January, 1919. It contained wood and linoleum cuts, half-tones and line drawings. It had colored paper inserts and coated stock inserts. The writers were Alfred Kreymborg, Vachel Lindsay, Robert Henri and Max Weber.

Arens's hand was seen again, more recently, in *The New Masses*, May, 1926, a large-paper monthly almost the size of a tabloid newspaper. The first number was exciting. The cause of the downtrodden was treated artistically in two colors by William Gropper, Art Young, Hugo Gellert, Hans Stengel, Otto Soglow and I. Klein. The workers' case was reduced to English sentences by William Carlos Williams, Scott Nearing, Michael Gold, William Montgomery Brown (once *Bishop* Brown), Mark Van Doren, and others. The entire tone of the magazine has changed since then. Art has fled from it, and only the restless humanitarian malcontents keep it appearing on the stands.

The Chicago Literary Times was issued weekly from March 1, 1923. It was written almost entirely by Ben Hecht and that it did not live two years was no criticism of its merit. It appeared, a single yellow sheet folded into four tabloid size pages, four columns to the page. It was the ornamental profanity of a reporter gone art and some of its gaudy phrases are worthy of commemoration in stone. There were pictures by Stanislaus Szukalski, Herman Rosse and Wallace Smith.

In conclusion I should like to offer this quotation to any man at the helm of a new periodical. He will do well to consider this for his first mast-head:

From *Living Men*, by John Nicholas Beffel, Vol. 1, No. 1, Chicago, May, 1917.

GET EXCITED! This is a new magazine. It will bite you if you are not good.

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MILA AND THE BIRDS

by Laura Benét

She dreamed that she would see great spaces,
Empty, lovely, terrible places
Where blue stars fell and planets shone
And mighty spirits travelled alone.
She dreamed that she would mount on wings
That cut the silken air like blades,
That ran like skates before the wind
Mocking the maudlin earth behind.

Northern lights—
She dreamed them in her sleep.
Shadowy heights—
She woke to see and weep.

And the wings fluttered, the wings quivered
And at her chamber window shivered
Rousing her from unconscious lull
By visions strangely beautiful
One morning in the frosty winter
When ice was edged as a splinter.
Were these true children or true birds
That spoke with reassuring words?
They were not pigeons, doves or owls,
They bore no likeness to her barn fowls
Though their bodies were lithe, their flesh was clear
Their feathers those of a chanticleer.
Crystal as glass their shining eyes,
Lake water at a spring sunrise.
Their heads wore the gloss of Sunday sheen.
One was crimson, one was green,
Two were violet, one was white
And the sixth as yellow as morning light.
With them in at the low door
Entered a hope not there before

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Though the little, old mother scuffed and scolded
The while she clothes in a cupboard folded,
Screaming the ragman the next day
Should bear the glittering flock away.
But the ragman's mind was consumed with dread
And he merely stared and scratched his head
As the glowing things shook their wings in his face:
"To kill them", said he, "will bring disgrace."

So safe they roosted in rafters dry
Through the thatch peered the distant sky.
And money came to the wee house
That had scarce supported a starving mouse.
Lovers came too where none had been
Courting her as she were a queen.

Conrad, Angelo,
Johannes, Luke.
(Names from a singing
Psaltery book.)
Courted and kissed her
Promised her love.
She sadly silent
As grass in a grove.

But the birds brought in grain
Yellow, milky and sweet;
The birds plucked out poppies
To lay at her feet;
The birds sang liltings
To her weary brain;
The birds whispered secrets
That brought down the rain!

Rain fell and kept on falling
As though the thirsty earth were calling.
Both beasts and peasants, noisily
Suffered in mirk and misery.
Suffered until the swelling flood
Must be appeased with human blood.
Boats were wafted in the stream
To seek out Mila's candle gleam.
"The witch, the witch," the people cried,
"She and her cursed flock, woe betide!
She shall be flung to roaring water
As though she were the devil's daughter."

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Those who ponder
Learn philosophy
From the dour forest
And the raging sky.
Out of a sighing heaven
Events are unfurled,
Mysteries riven
Not of this world.

They moored their shallop at Mila's gate
On an evening dark and late.
As the billows drenched them with spray
Peered in a terrified dismay.
Feathers concealed the wattled walls
As though the house wore ancient shawls.
The leaking roof was thatched with down
Soft as ermine on courtier's gown.
And at the window, steep and high
Seven birds were poised to fly.
One had sadly wistful eyes
Looking on them in stunned surprise
As waves met over the little town
With its evilly minded men—

Then the waters sank—and slowly,
The marshes grew green again.

The ragman, clinging in wonder
To the house that rode sturdily.
Saw seven great birds a-whirling
Arise out of the sea.
Saw Mila and her bird suitors
Fly away in a brilliant cloud.
And, after years (says the legend),
A race lovely and strong and proud
Came to dwell by the self-same meadows,
To plough by the selfsame streams
And out of knowledge and kindness
To weave new, delicate dreams.
For delicate dreams breed color
And untutored souls grow wings
And from the unpeopled spaces
Summon benign, bright things.
And even a humble ragman
May find, in his low estate
That those shall be small who are mighty
And the humble ones shall be great.

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THE LANGUAGE OF LOBSTER ALLEY

by Hiram Motherwell

THERE are, as everyone knows, languages in America which are completely of and for a given group or occupational stratum and virtually incomprehensible to all other groups. I do not, of course, mean local dialects, whose distinctiveness consists chiefly in a peculiar pronunciation of otherwise familiar words. Nor do I mean slang merely. For slang is a collection of isolated words and expressions, and slang may be dead as Latin when its roots and associations are unknown to the user. I am referring to those modes of expression, those manners of using words somewhat distantly related to the English dictionary, which grow so authentically out of the group's customs and ways of thinking that they are able to convey information and ideas with a vitality and fidelity which standardized English, in that particular *milieu*, could never hope to attain.

Of all these American languages, surely none is richer or more responsive than that of Lobster Alley—which is to say the theatrical section of New York—as it has grown under the patronage and guidance of the weekly newspaper, *Variety*, and of its inspired editor, Sime Silverman.

Variety is one of the truly great newspapers of America. None can surpass it in the abundance, accuracy and timeliness of news carried, and, above all, in editorial honesty and courage. Here, however, I am writing of *Variety* not as a purveyor of news but as a creator of language—yes, of literature. For by all accepted standards some of the best writing in *Variety* is literature. To those belonging to its group it conveys its message swiftly and concisely in living words which evoke clear images and quick emotional response.

But he who is not acquainted with the language of *Variety* is certain, on first reading it, to be baffled—or, to speak more accurately, to go blotto. What, for example, can the uninitiated make out of this headline?—

PASH FLAPS' M.C. FAN CLUBS RATED WORTHLESS TO THEATRES AS B.O. GAG.

Translated into English, the sentence would read somewhat as follows: "It has been ascertained that organized theatre parties of young girls who have a sentimental admiration for the actors who function as masters of ceremonies at motion picture theatres are worthless so far as increasing box office receipts goes". But even at this length the sentence (which is certainly not good English) does not tell its story. It would require an extensive gloss to explain certain references and to render the peculiar quality attaching to certain of the words. To explain the connotations of the sentence to an Englishman I should probably need two pages.

"Passionate flappers" does not accurately render "pash flaps". The point of the latter is (as *Variety's* reader knows from long acquaintance with the phenomenon) that the sentimental adoration of thousands of school-

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girls for the handsome *conférenciers* of the movie shows has been methodically organized and exploited. "Fan" has passed through a dozen mutations since its origin in the ancient days of baseball. "Gag" takes its direct origin from the professional name for a vaudeville joke which obtains a quick and certain response, but its meaning has been broadened to include any type of effective come-on. So the gloss might be continued almost indefinitely.

It should be clear to the reader from this example that *Variety* does not affect these slang terms merely to appear smart. *Variety* is not striving to be clever; it is striving to convey crisp and exact information. Although it commonly appears with seventy-two or more pages of the smallest legible type, it has not an inch of space to waste. Nor have its readers any time to waste. True, theatre folk are not, by and large, very busy; but they are always in a hurry, and always eager to leap to a new topic of interest.

That explains *Variety's* preference for abbreviations and telescoped phrases, and its peculiar use (or disuse) of the definite article. For example, this from its report on a recent film:

> Zoe Akins's play written down to a presumptive neighborhood fan grade of taste, and what it might have held as a class screen production discounted. Result is just pretty good program material. Physical production a beauty, acting first rate, but continuity faulty, in that the job of turning a class story into a rough-and-tumble picture has been poorly done. . . . Picture has many slow spots where story progress lags badly; comedy incidents have been inexpertly written in, and all that is left are two or three melodramatic episodes with a stirring fistic battle at the finish.

An expert's report written to transmit a reliable estimate to the profession in the shortest possible space.

Or this summary of the emotional strategy employed by writers of popular songs:

> These song writers exploit motherhood into a mania, and go Rotary about any old half-baked, klux-ridden Dixie backwash. They make love in kindergarten terms, turn Sunday-school superintendent about prosties whom they term "faded roses" or "butterflies", and otherwise trade on primitive mass ideas.

As an example of the economical use of lively images to tell a story I cite the following:

> If you can't develop a personality or mental power in L. A. [*Variety* for Los Angeles] it's not the fault of swamis, inspirationists, soul scientists and others who sell their lectures hereabouts. . . . Swamis with turkish towels around their heads with some looking as though from Harlem, cut in heavy on the big dough. One has built himself a temple and retreat for followers which set him back half a million. He plays loose with some of his femme followers and has lost the decision to a number of irate husbands. But he still does business at the same spot.

For the sake of brevity and directness, *Variety* is always willing to coin a word. Its readiness to innovate new verbs used to panic me but now I ecstasize over it. And its novel nouns invariably have color or flavor. Which expression (provided you know the language) do you prefer: "a great deal of money", or "heavy sugar": "jokes in questionable taste", or "blue gags"? Are you not saddened by the fact that Times Square hotel biz is on the terrific fritz?

The concise expressions in which *Variety* abounds (whether picked up from the Rialto or injected into Broadway's speech) are a delight to the gourmet of words. Instead of stating that a certain play is a financial failure it reports laconically, "show looks floppo". Handsome guides hired by dude ranches to provide a touch of romance for rich eastern women are "S. A. cowboys". "Dirt in shorts" is action or dialogue in one-reel films which might offend the audience's sensibilities. The difficulty in defining such dirt derives from the fact that "what the acute town's self appointed dick might sense as dirt, after it has

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passed through years on the stage with nothing but laughs greeting it, is something the producers cannot anticipate".

Variety does not strain after verbal novelty. If an expression like "on the cuff" is useful, it is permitted to remain in the paper for years until a more concise or vivid one turns up. But its slang does not become a convention or a habit. It is continually freshened with new words and phrases deriving from the recent experiences or interests of its readers. And Silverman has not the dogmatic reverence of many a managing editor for brevity. When one of his reporters reveals a literary flair, he is permitted to embroider his writing with touches of interpretative fancy or verbal elegance. A stingy lothario is "a sheik ham with a dame complex". A film is commended because it provides "what every woman loves—beauty and the beast". Another is adjudged probable flop because it "ignores the male-and-female get-together principle". I have never received, in one sentence, so vivid an impression of the moral state of contemporary Soviet Russia as in *Variety's* report that "censors are so severe that in one film bull and cow offer the only love interest".

The following paragraph is not, in a literary sense, satisfactory, even by *Variety* standards, but it gets rapidly over a good deal of ground:

> Probably the greatest cost in Television will be that expended for servicing the equipment. Like in its operation, no mere electrician can be called off the street and breathe over it like so many do on talker gadgets in different parts of the country.

A fair example of how *Variety* records the trend of the times is afforded by its story explaining that barflies are getting the privacy yen:

> Better grade speaks in Times Square are dispensing with femme shills and hangers-out due to complaints of the big spenders who have practically delivered an ultimatum that either the dames are out or they transfer their patronage elsewhere.
>
> "Dame" angle considered essential in the face of heavy opposish is now agreed a nuisance by joint owners operating on the up and up with many of the places having invoked the former cabaret regulations in pre-prohibition days in refusing admittance to unescorted women.

But the following represents *Variety* at its best. I sought to condense it, but its exposition is so compact, its language so concise, that any excision is mutilation:

> Los Angeles, Jan. 11.
>
> Softest racket for heavy sugar is the radio fortune telling, sex secret racket, with more than 100 stations in the country innocent promoters of a gimmick that is illegal if worked through mail solicitation.
>
> Seems harmless enough to a radio station to allow one of the gimmick operators an hour a day to tell fortunes free for the listeners-in. But the station operators never take a tumble to the sideline, or if they do they wink. Today the gag is growing from the racket stage to a business—and a sweet one at that.
>
> The broadcasting station's end of the game is innocent, but it is the side racket which results from the broadcasts that is making coin for charlatans working the umpchays in every section of the country.
>
> This burg has been an especially good ground with a dozen or more pulling the stuff over local radio stations during the last six months.
>
> Racket centers around a chap in Chicago who nicks the racketeers one grand a year for horoscopes. With more than a hundred subscribing, this is business aplenty for him.
>
> As Prince This, Doctor That or Professor So-and-So the gimmickers travel all over the country. The fortune telling come-ons will always try a new one—hence the migration. One chap is credited with a hundred grand in six months in this town. A real home near L. A. while he was here and a flock of seven femme secretaries, one of whom is now filling in since the storm and strife left the bed and board.
>
> Racket is to call for questions over the radio that the professor will answer at a later date. So many come in he can only answer a small percentage of them. Answers are vague and useless to the looker-in.
>
> At one station here 100,000 requests were re-

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ceived in 11 weeks. One hundred thousand acknowledged chumps! Then the secretaries get to work mailing the come-ons, offering four answers for a dollar—a dream book for a dollar—horoscope for a dollar—sex secrets for a dollar.

Thirty per cent of those solicited come across with one to four dollars. Ten percent of that number went for the whole $4. Most of the marks were women, with the femme element going heavy for the sex secret stuff.

These books are supplied by the same gink in Chicago who supplies the horoscopes. Cost to the racketeers is three cents in quantities. And they sell for a dollar.

Local professor sits in his office with a dictaphone in front of him. His femme secs open the mail and empty the greenbacks into baskets, then pass the letters to the professor who reads the answers into the dictaphone, later to be typed and sent to the umpchays. He handles the letters at about 75 an hour—at a dollar per letter.

Graft extends further. The least hint of more coin in the offing sends a special come-on—the need for private consultation. No figures on the extent of this end of the racket.

Final coin combing is the selling of the sucker lists to the mail-order houses at five cents per name.

"One of whom is now filling in since the storm and strife left the bed and board"—this glorious phrase rolls on my tongue, and a hundred repetitions do not lessen its savor.

Silverman's use of quotation marks is a study in itself. In the phrase "innocent 'stuff' ", you might imagine that the latter word is placed in quotes because it is slang. But Silverman would permit no such affectation. Stuff is the accepted professional term for a lecturer's spiel or line. It is here placed in quotes because, in this instance, it was not legitimate *stuff*, but phoney come-on.

Or can you get the particular connotation of the quotation marks in this headline?—

CABARET FLOOR SHOW JUST "DIRT" TO RITZY BUT IDLE BROADWAY CHORUS GIRLS.

There is no generic reason for placing the word in quotes. Dirt is dirt; it is s.a. come-on used for an unworthy or illegitimate purpose. But the floor dancing of the cabaret is not, *per se*, dirt; it is biz. The unemployed chorus girls of musical comedy, however—forced to take employment in the cafés and seeking to maintain their dignity in their fallen estate—pretend that the whole purpose of the cabaret worker's dancing is to obtain dates from cloak-and-suiters. The quotes, in other words, are there to indicate what goes on in the chorus girls' minds.

Silverman is a maniac for accuracy. I doubt if there is another newspaper in New York so well proof-read as *Variety*. The misspelling of any one of the hundreds of obscure proper names which appear in each issue would be an event—ending in torture—in the office.

But Silverman, I think, will go down into newspaper history, like Dana of the *Sun*, for his permanent influence on our language and on our use of it. There is no need to remind the reader that the slang of today becomes the literary English of tomorrow. Wells and Shaw are full of last generation's Whitechapel. But to insert slang phrases into English sentences is one thing; to mould a style with the materials and in the spirit of living slang is another. Dana's boys took the language of the streets and used it—free from self-consciousness or apology—with unexampled vigor and flexibility. Silverman's reporters are likewise supplying new blood and food for the American language of tomorrow.

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EDUCATION BY DESULTORY READING

by Virginia Moore

COUNT VILLIERS DE L'ISLE ADAM did not flatter books nor refute living when he said, "As for living, our servants will do that for us". A good book cannot supersede life; it reveals and interprets and extends life. Breath in the physical lungs is premise to both. And though living in a world of men must always be primary, and reading secondary, the privilege inherent in both is play of the imagination. In delight, if not in value, they share honors. Neither can be by proxy. Living and reading are strictly individual adventures, as individual as the progress of the soul. They are the conditions of the progress of the soul. A man who has never read a book can develop spiritually. Millions did before the advent of printing. But great literature hastens the process by multiplying experience. In comparatively unimaginative modern society, with popular myth gone and the machine encroaching, a good book is at once a luxury and a necessity.

It is sheer tragedy, therefore, that the reading of the world's classics is for so many confined to the period of their so-called education. In college the best books of history, biography, fiction, exposition and poetry are systematically assigned and laboriously read. It has been observed that this compulsory reading tends to spoil, may even destroy for a lifetime, the *Odyssey*, Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, the *Canterbury Tales*, Macaulay's *History of England*, Carlyle's essay on old clothes, *The Ring and the Book*, Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, *Henry Esmond*, Wycherly's plays, Emerson's essays—to name only a few at random. I submit that education which destroys the beauty of books is not properly education, no matter how much it promotes factual knowledge and increases intellectual dexterity. The Grail of education, as Blake protests and Yeats reiterates, should be maturity of the imagination. That is why the best education is by desultory reading. Indeed I am tempted to go radical and say that the reading of the world's classics should never be compulsory; not for the reason usually cited, that compulsion makes one, out of human perversity, hate the thing compelled, but because reading should be carefully fitted to the spiritual state and stage of the reader, if it is to exert the maximum imaginative influence. Who but the reader can choose? What but the soul knows what it needs at a given time? The soul, contrary to prevalent opinion, has a marvellous faculty for finding what it is ready for. When Keats was ready for shaping sensuous images he found Spenser. When Katherine Mansfield was ready for clear objective art she found the Russians. When Masefield was ready for a new humanity unerringly he found a copy of Chaucer.

Of course there are some who would never read a good book unless compelled to. I am not speaking of them. They will never get a great deal from books anyway. They are not to be censured or praised for their derelic-

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tions; they have not yet reached that stage of spiritual development when either is justly possible.

I am speaking of those who respond to a good book with excitement; who are curious to know what the greatest minds have thought; who wish always to transcend their latest imaginative experience with fresh and diversified experience; who trust advice spoken low in themselves to read, for it is time, the complete works of Pascal or the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius.

Literature read in this way becomes, and rightly, all mixed up with one's being. It is not intellectual exercise nor cultural duty but an adventure of the soul converted into the very stuff of the soul. The mind being free it is happy and therefore more impressionable and retentive. I have never believed that concentration unless voluntary was an aid to memory, save in the vulgar realm of facts. The mind has a natural growth like a plant; but its successive stages are more numerous than those of a plant and its flower is prepared for but seldom perfected in this world. The growth is organic. It is not, as modern education seems to think, by accretion. Fine literature is like the weather which falls on the plant: it must be seasonable to do any good. It acts as sun and fructifying rain, and heat, and cold. Frost in July would not be helpful; it might be fatal. The soul has varying needs through its untemporal year. In the case of a wise soul it is well to trust those needs as they become conscious, however arbitrary seem the time and the order.

It took me a long while to dissociate from Greek history the odor which clung to a text-book analysis of the structure of Greek society, and of the phalanx. Until recently, whenever I thought of the Grandeur which was Rome I saw a rather dumpy lictor printed on poor paper; I had to see the triumphant ruins of the Forum under a blue actual sky and voluntarily read Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* to dissipate that stuffy academic ghost. I would have gone to Aeschylus much sooner and appreciated much sooner the "necessity" which came before Chronos and Zeus if an English course had not removed *Prometheus Bound* and *The Libation-Pourers* from my immediate life. For ten years Virgil was damaged for me by the drudgery of inept translations done at a time when I was not mature enough to wonder at his conception. Theocritus of the lovely idylls, Aristophanes, incomparable satirist, Plato to a degree, Horace with his cup of Falernian wine, Lucretius intent on ultimates, and Catullus so humanly unable to escape from his Lesbia—they were all deadened for me by too early contact and not brought to life again by desultory reading until like Lazarus they had lain a long time bound with linen.

I use with apology personal evidence in what must, in part at least, be a personal chronicle. The conclusion which forms the subject of this paper could only be reached after first-hand experience with education by education and education by desultory reading. I give my testimony as scrupulously as a witness in a test case.

Acquaintance and friendship with the best literature may be started in a hundred different ways. If chronology is disregarded it is no matter. A great mind is great whenever it functioned. The imaginative virtue of art is disdainful of periods as such.

You leaf through an anthology on a strange table. John Clare. You have never heard of John Clare. The poem is charming. Like lawns before breakfast—"blebbed with dew". The next day you order John Clare. Or you see a publisher's advertisement in a reputable weekly. *The Life of Gerard Manley Hopkins.* Someone quoted him once. You remember you exclaimed at the time and took pleasure in recognizing great poetry whether anyone else did or not. You would like to know more about him. You would like to know if that packed unusual style were fortuitous or the result of a theory. You send for his life and his complete works,

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and two days later you feel like Keats when, on opening Chapman's *Homer*, he compared himself to stout Cortez. Impressed suddenly with the fact that autobiography can be the starkest revelation you read in rapid succession Benvenuto Cellini, Amiel's *Journal*, Marie Bashkirtseff and George Sand's *Diary*. An allusion sends you precipitous to the delicate confessions of Dorothy Wordsworth, and you understand better the brother's debt. Hardy's poetry recommends his prose; and having the disillusion natural to your years substantiated by *Jude the Obscure*, with pleasant cynicism you pass to *The Way of All Flesh* and *Madame Bovary* and *Of Human Bondage*. The very excess of pessimism swings you the other way and you come all trembling and receptive to the pastoral and exquisite implications of *Green Mansions* by W. H. Hudson. You decide that simplicity of heart in literature as in life is excellent above all else; at the same time you are trying to formulate a workable religion of your own. You re-read *The Hound of Heaven*. You borrow from a corner library the *Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis; the librarian mentions *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence and *Centuries of Meditation* by Thomas Traherne; you read them avidly. You think that medieval times were not so benighted after all; they had a sturdy singleness of mind; Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* affects you like a religious conversion. You remember vaguely that George Moore, whom you have been meaning to read for a long time, wrote a lot of stories about monks. But before you leave Mr. Moore you have mourned to distraction "Marie Pellegrin" and spent too short a night with "The Lovers of Orelay". His, you maintain, is a beautiful style, sad as the insubstantial hour after the sun drops, when all the birds sing at once. You become interested in style as dynamics, "a personal and wilful fire transfiguring words and sounds and events". You find the *Urne-buriall* of Sir Thomas Browne, *Our Lady of Sorrows* by Thomas De Quincey, *Intentions* by Oscar Wilde. The epigrammatical Oscar Wilde sets you puzzling over the brilliant Irish: Ernest Dowson, Lionel Johnson, "A.E.", George Bernard Shaw, William Butler Yeats, Sean O'Casey, J. M. Synge. What, exactly is the Celtic quality? You take it in its most concentrated modern form, in Synge's *Playboy of the Western World* and *Deirdre of the Sorrows*. Deirdre, in the last act, quarreling with her lover on the edge of their double grave, and then rising to heroic levels of understanding, to tragic ecstasy, gives you a katharsis in the thorough Aristotelian sense, and you must read Yeats on the same subject and the poem by James Stephens which begins,

Let all men go apart and weep.

Ordinarily this would sidetrack you to *The Crock of Gold* which, as a unique experience would bear repeating, but you feel now the "much madness" which Emily Dickinson called "divinest sense" and must keep alive in your breast that shriven kind of exaltation by suffering vicariously with the greatest spirits. With Cleopatra you draw yourself to your full height and say to Iras:

"Give me my robe, put on my crown; I have
Immortal longings in me. . . ."

You cry with Lear on the heath:

"Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! Spout, rain!
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,
You owe me no subscription: then, let fall
Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man."

Power and terror draw you inevitably to Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights*. It will be days before you recover from the ghost of Cathie wounding her wrists, sawing them back and forth, on the broken glass of the window. You refuse the common light of

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day, and of contemporary writing. Especially the magazines. You reflect that few if any would print a story by—well, A. E. Coppard. You remember one, now, about a man who came into a tavern—you think it was raining—and he didn't love the girl but he went away from her changed—she was sitting at a table with a mug—that uncapturable quality. . . . You read seven stories by Coppard without stopping. Then you read a translation from the Danish of Jens Peter Jacobsen because you fancy you see a relation between Coppard and Jacobsen. The short story is quite different from the short novel. The latter has no less firmness of structure but more substance in plot and character. In discussing the two forms with friends you are lead to read James's *Daisy Miller*, Turgenev's *A Lear of the Steppes*, and Willa Cather's *A Lost Lady*. You already know *Ethan Frome* but you read it again to see if it is as fine as you thought. Then steeped in fiction you turn for relief and contrast to poetry; Donne, this time, because you are liking at present friction of the mind in poetry. You discover the most physical of poems, "Love's Progress", and the most unphysical, "The Extasie".

Compulsion from without has often deprived college graduates of literature in so far as literature is a delirium in the blood. Compulsion from within has often more than made up for academic swindle, but only when a stubborn element in the individual had, in the first place, refused complete disenchantment. Some do not possess that stubborn element. Theirs is a dead loss.

Compulsion from within may be warm or cold, that is, it may spring from the emotions or the will. The emotions produce perhaps a greater sensitivity. In the poem about a wood spurge Dante Gabriel Rossetti and in the poem about grief Robert Graves show how grief sharpens the power of perceiving minute details. Passionate interest does the same thing to reading eyes, whether it is passionate interest in plot, character, atmosphere, method of presentation, or ideas. The passion for ideas is strongest. It sweeps from the *War and Peace* of Tolstoy to *The Tragic Sense of Life* of Unamuno and on to *The Dance of Life* by Havelock Ellis, with no less precision than impetuosity. But it is possible to read the same books by cold act of volition, because you are ashamed of your ignorance of Tolstoy's social creed, or because you feel you should know more about the best contemporary Spanish thought, or because Havelock Ellis is being quoted extensively in your circle. A course of Plato, Spinoza and Santayana, self-imposed because of an intellectual determination to read originals instead of derivatives, the philosophers themselves instead of their commentators, may be as beneficial to the soul as a driving excitement about the nature of God as seen by three exceptional men. Rolland's *Jean-Christophe* and Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*, begun because of the vanity that you know French literature or the snobbery that you understand artistic neurotics (being yourself a member of that "splendid and pitiable family") may prove as rewarding as if you had read them in humility, as an impulse, out of wild enthusiasm for the subjective method or stream of consciousness. The point is that in either case it is a personal decision and impetus. If will, it is probably accompanied by some passion. If passion of the mind, it probably comes to focus in the will. In other words, the soul has reached a minor or a major climax. That nostalgia for a better country, for heroic climate and "actions how like an angel's", which is a not undesirable sickness of the soul, has reached a crisis. Delirium and ecstasy may set in. Meanwhile there is that terrible sanity of the sick, which sees everything in sharp light, almost with omniscience, and will not forget, ever, because the vision has been incorporated into the permanent part of this changing being.

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A NOTE ON HANS CAROSSA

by Edwin Muir

In December 1928 there appeared in Germany under the imprint of the Insel Verlag a beautifully produced little volume in honor of the fiftieth birthday of Hans Carossa. Among the twenty-five writers who collaborated in rendering him homage were Austria's two greatest poets, Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Rainer Maria Rilke, and several of Germany's most gifted young writers, among them Paul Alverdes, whose small but exquisite masterpiece, *The Whistlers' Room*, has since been translated into English. At that time Carossa's name, I think it is safe to say, was virtually unknown either in England or America; and even now only the few who have happened to come across that strange book, *A Roumanian Diary*, published some time ago, will recognize it. That little volume had itself an ironical fate. It was caught in the spate of war books, and seems to have been allotted for review to experts who wished to see how Roumanian atrocities compared with Russian, or to generals who were resolved to uphold their own ideas on strategy against the author's. It was, however, a book bound to puzzle or exasperate the ordinary war reviewer; for, although the diary of a busy medical officer during the German campaign against Roumania, the most moving incident in it was the death of a cat. Besides, there was no glorification or impeachment of warfare, no noticeable symptom of patriotism or of pacifism: none of the usual and natural responses to the War.

There is indeed something enigmatical in all Carossa's books. He has a trick of unexpected emphasis, of passing over things which other writers would seize upon, and concentrating, yet never disproportionately, on some point which, but for his vigilance, would have been overlooked. These points are chosen with an unfathomable skill, by a faculty not so much of selection as of subconscious divination; and the light in which he sets them irradiates all the stretches of experience, whether terrible or merely dull, lying between, so that these never need to be described. Carossa's uniform method as a writer is to make some great alteration in our imaginative conception of life while ostensibly making only a minute one; and his art is an art almost entirely of implication. It is this, probably, that makes one feel in all his writings a sort of natural magic; a natural magic not fugitive and indefinable as in poetry, but constant and almost reasonable. Everything he touches is transmuted, yet never robbed of its diurnal reality; it becomes —one can only put it in this way—at once more ordinary and more strange.

Occupation with trifles, submission of experience to mysterious lights: these are often ways of escaping from problems too disagreeable for the writer to face; and a hasty reader might find Carossa evasive. But one has only to turn to a passage here and there in *A Roumanian Diary* to see how great is one's mistake. The following, for example: "Like a swarm of hornets the shells dashed against the rocks, tearing the flesh from the

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limbs of the living and the dead. Sometimes German wounded called to us, sometimes Roumanian, who were now being mutilated for a second time by the fire of their comrades. Some of them suffered in silence; others twisted like wounded snakes. Through the zone of death we saw Germans lightly wounded descending the mountain, a few white and shaken, but others walking jauntily, dressed up as if for a fancy-dress ball in the gay-colored belts, jackets, and military decorations of their dead enemies. One had brought back a gramophone with him from the Roumanian lines; now an idea suddenly struck him, he placed it on a stone and set it going, the page in *Figaro* began to sing, and like the voice of a mad soul Mozart's music rose in a world of ruin". Or again: "Turning round I looked down in the face of a dying man of about thirty; his eyes were closed, his mouth terribly twisted with pain. His fingers still clutched fast the hem of my cloak. Through a gray cape which covered his breast a slight vapor was rising; R. threw it back; under his torn ribs his lungs and heart lay exposed, the heart beating sluggishly. A number of silver and copper medals of saints which he had been wearing on a black ribbon round his neck were driven deep into his flesh, some of them much bent. The man half opened his eyes; his lips moved. Simply for the sake of doing something I filled my morphia syringe, and then I saw that this was what he seemed to want; he pushed the cloak aside and tried to stretch out his arm to me in readiness. . . . After the injection he laid his head back against the birch almost in comfort, and closed his eyes, in whose deep sockets large snowflakes were already beginning to fall. We hurried on; it was almost an hour before we reached Hallesul".

How can one describe the spirit which breathes through these two scenes? It is a soft light that beats upon them; yet how definite is the detail, macabre in the gramophone-playing, horrible in the "slight vapor" rising from the dying man's breast. There is a sentence in the same book which suggests better than any formula could Carossa's implicit attitude to his themes: "The world, rough, raw and monstrous as it is—I live in it as in a thin and gaudily iridescent soap-bubble, holding my breath to keep it from bursting". In his books every object is touched with the solicitous skill of a physician who knows the pressure which will maintain its true shape, or restore it, if it is lost, and who "holds his breath" lest any too violent movement should injure or destroy it, whether it be "raw and monstrous" or delicate. Every object is to him like a thing infinitely fragile and infinitely valuable, which must not even be handled too much, but rather placed in a not too urgent light. His style is a pure illuminating medium. It is clear as water; but it has an inner lustre like the limpid stream he found near the Roumanian front, which gave the common brown pebbles a gleam as of gold. He dips an object or an experience into that stream, and immediately it glows with all the hues which the customary light has dulled or worn away. His books paint a perpetual morning world where all things seem newly awakened, and have their first bloom upon them.

This quiet radiance plays with a particular magic round the scenes in his two little masterpieces, *Eine Kindheit* and *Verwandlungen einer Jugend*. There has probably been no books on childhood such as these since mystics like Traherne. By an inflection here and there, by the rhythm of the prose, sweet, tranquil and pure, they do indeed faintly but persistently recall Traherne. But the radiance which lies over them is less bright, and more diffused; it does not come directly from heaven, like Traherne's, but circuitously, through the hidden forces of the earth, which to the child are secretly bound with the heavenly ones. It is imminent in such things as a favorite splinter of granite, or a glass bead which the boy loves to swing against the window-pane; in all animals, in stones

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and trees, in houses, and especially in the house which is his home. To this world can be applied the words which Hofmannsthal applied to Carossa's work itself. "Of Carossa's books," he says, "nay, of any chapter in them, one can speak as of some mysteriously operative substance such as radium from which a life-giving power goes out, only some of whose effects we know, and through which we feel that we are brought in contact with quite obscure realms; yet those powers work in silence, and are more akin to the powers in the growing seed or in the tree which heals itself than to those which come to being in the tempest." Sometimes those forces appear in some dreadful guise, but then the child feels protective powers spontaneously arising to restore the balance, and heal the wound in the world which enfolds him. Take this curious passage, for example, from *Eine Kindheit*: "All things, even the most terrible, when we encounter them, must take on a form consonant with our own nature; everyone has a profound knowledge of this, and because of it good men live in the world without fear. I had never been a nervous child, and though I had no desire to look on death, neither did I ever try to avoid it. With a feeling of solemn exaltation, while a shudder which brought tears to my eyes ran over me, I had seen in the mortuary the robed dead lying between their burning candles, and I had not thought of corruption. The feeling that the invisible God Who chose to manifest Himself in shadowy hints had here for once operated solemnly and immediately: this childish feeling with its grave terrors mastered me and allowed no trace of animal panic to rise. Strangely comforted I went my way, and everyone I met afterwards seemed to me very beautiful and good". Here we see clearly the powers which make the bark of the tree heal itself, and the reciprocal working of the forms of the child's world.

To these forces the child resigns himself with an astonishing faith, which may be due simply to the fact that being three-parts potentiality, he has a deeper knowledge of all potential things than a grown man can have. Accordingly his affection goes out to all sorts of objects, making us feel that the life of children is indeed a kind of fabulous life. "The presence of animals," Carossa says in *Eine Kindheit*, "always plunged me into a vacant, melancholy expectation such as I never felt among human beings. I wondered if other children felt the same thing, but I never discovered whether they did or not, and believed that I was the only one in the world to have this feeling. At such moments if thoughts of my father and mother, my lessons and prayers, came into my mind, I put them away as unendurably alien, as if under the spell of the animals I wanted to be nothing but an animal myself, and not to be drawn out of the innocent melancholy of animal life; until suddenly I would spring up in a kind of alarm and run home, glad to emerge again into the everyday life of mankind."

Carossa's world of childhood has another main quality which all but the greatest writers on childhood have overlooked: it has an order far more immutable than that of the adult's world, an order in which all things seem to have rested on their stations forever. There like eternal patterns exist the figures, simple as an abstraction, immutable as the tables of a law, of father and mother, servant and teacher; figures which indeed seem all the more intensely real because they are incarnate symbols, because father and mother and teacher and servant are more than the general idea of a human being, and because through them the child guesses at the order of the world and resigns himself to it with greater security. That order is to him almost absolutely permanent; for the child has a sense of duration which not only runs back, like ours, into the past, but—as it has not still been undermined by doubt—forward into the future as well. In that world everything seems to have an additional dimension, and to exist in some space at right angles to

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Time; and it is here, and not in isolated passages, that Carossa reminds us of Traherne. As one watches the little boy in *Eine Kindheit* moving with such mysterious confidence and certainty in his world filled with beings greater than himself, one is reminded of the famous passage in which Traherne tells how, on "a lowering and sad evening, being alone in the field, when all things were dead and quiet, a certain want and horror" fell upon him. He goes on to tell of the thoughts which came to comfort him, and some of these seem to take us into the very heart of Carossa's work. Among them were that he was "concerned in all the world", that "in the remotest borders the causes of peace" delighted him, that "a remembrance of all the joys" he had from his birth ought always to be with him, and that "the presence of Cities, Temples, and Kingdoms" ought to sustain him.

This is an almost complete key to Carossa's work. His intention, never explicit, is essentially to show that we are concerned in all the world and that distant and invisible things, "the presence of Cities, Temples, and Kingdoms", sustain us, and, more particularly in his books on childhood, to remind us of all the joys we have had from our birth. There is, it can almost be said, no pain in his books, for pain has been transmuted in memory, or understood anew in relation to all that world in which we are concerned. In reading even his most trifling incidents we are conscious of the unshakable order of that world; and the movements of his figures there have something of the serenity of the motions of the stars. Trifling or erratic at first sight, we presently feel in them the thrill of an ethereal harmony, which comes from our divination that here all the things that have been torn from their stations have been set back upon them again. This is Carossa's rare distinction as a writer: that he not merely describes things, but quietly, as if by an act of mystical legerdemain, restores them to their places—where alone they are truly what they ought to be. This is why there is serenity in his descriptions even of pain. He does not soften it; he sees it as a mysterious and terrible force; but in the powers which rise to combat it he discerns the order of the world, and remembers that we all rest upon it. He has a constant sense that at every moment, no matter how terrible, the reconciling powers which hold the universe together are near us. His apprehension of those powers is in the last resort a mystical one; and like all mystics he finds significance in incidents and modes of experience which by the normal mind are accepted either as mysteries or commonplaces. But he differs from most mystics in always trying to provide a practical and everyday justification for his intuitions; for his perpetual object is completeness. It is therefore only in some of his rare dreams that we get a pure mystical vision, which he sets down without comment, and simply as part of the reality which he is trying to understand. "I was a child again, and walking over stony mountains through a thunderstorm. I had a white scroll of paper in my hand, and did not lift my eyes from it. If I ask myself now what was on that white scroll, I must confess that it was blank, not a letter nor a sign on it; and yet I was enraptured by what I read there. Low rolling clouds rained upon it, lightning flashes flickered over it, the sky and the crags thundered, and from the distance the uncanny spirits of the dead called to me; but I read ineffably blissful words upon that blank paper, and was unmoved by the storm and the cries of the dead." Even when he is describing the cries of the dying, Carossa seems to be reading on this scroll which is invisible to us of things which have lent to his utterance that peculiar purity, sweetness and serenity which are without a rival in modern German prose.

There has been a sort of literary agitation recently against books on childhood, an agitation justified partly, no doubt, by the mawkishness or irresponsibility of so much of that class of literature. It is assumed, and

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nine times out of ten perhaps rightly, that the writer is indirectly attempting to reassume the privileges of the child, and to be found charming by being found appealing. Yet it is obvious that there are as many ways of writing about the preoccupations of childhood as about those of adulthood; about sex, for example, to take the most salient of all, for its advent marks the end of the one stage and the beginning of the other. The saving virtue in any description of childhood and love, both so difficult to describe without excess of sentiment, is a sense of proportion, a just evaluation of the most subtle and yet insistent realities; and this virtue Carossa has in a high degree. For a writer who tries to set every object in its place in relation to the whole cannot overlook the fact that his main theme, childhood, has its right relation too; and it is impossible that he should treat it in the style, for example, of Mr. A. A. Milne or Sir James Barrie. With Carossa the choice of childhood is indeed, one almost feels, a just incident of his method as a writer, which is, as I have said, to emphasize an overlooked factor, and to make a great alteration in our imaginative conception of life while ostensibly making only a small one. In describing the child growing up within its unit of the family, he insensibly evokes for us an image of humanity growing up within a unity far larger and more complex, yet still human. And, as he describes them, the virtues of this smaller economy are the same essentially as those of the greater. Childhood is not to him, as it is to Sir James Barrie, the period of irresponsibility; he is free from that almost universal illusion of the adult mind looking back on its first protected years. On the contrary he shows the child reasoning on cause and effect, guessing at and taking on responsibility almost as naturally as it plays and day-dreams, and recognizing gradually that it is part of an economy.

This is one of the qualities which distinguish Carossa's descriptions of childhood from those of more conventional writers; another is his strong sense of continuity and tradition. Real integrity in a people consists in its truth to the deepest things in its experience from the time of its emergence; real integrity in an individual consists in the same thing. This is no doubt the true sense in which the child is father to the man; and this also is probably what makes us feel that the man who has quite erased his childhood is distorted from the pre-ordained human norm. In reading Carossa we divine that the truths which he expresses reach back through all his life; that they have the same continuously creative force as the traditions of a people. So although his subject matter is limited, he is more naturally and universally human than any other writer of his age. Nor is his humanity merely quietistic; the virtues he unobtrusively fortifies in us are active ones, and he fortifies them in the most natural way, by means of those "life-giving powers" of which Hofmannsthal spoke, "only some of whose effects we know", but all of which are salutary. He himself was for many years a busy doctor in the poor quarter of Munich, and an overworked medical officer during the War. And this fact may perhaps best explain his gnomic sentence, already quoted, about the "rough, raw and monstrous" world which one must live in as in a soap-bubble, holding one's breath to keep it from bursting. In his daily life he saw no doubt enough of the rawness of the world; yet his vocation taught him that its health or sickness, its harmony or disharmony, depended upon an almost infinitesimal delicacy of balance, which a single erroneous movement could derange. Every sentence he wrote holds this double implication: of a world "rough, raw and monstrous", and yet depending upon a balance of forces so sensitive that the mind can only guess at it. His two most characteristic books describe a few trifling incidents in the life of a boy; yet out of these he has constructed probably a more complete and proportioned image of the world than any other writer of his time.

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THE THEATRE

WHAT IS THE REVUE?

by Francis Fergusson

THE revue is, for the purposes of this article, a lively monstrosity inhabiting Times Square. It lines the pockets of the producers, lulls and befuddles the tired business man; accomplishes the apotheosis of the successful vaudeville performer, and worries poets with designs on the stage, who envy it its technique and despair of its stupidity. I propose here to consider this creature as it shows itself in six recent shows.

The Show-Business Again

The Vanderbilt Revue was presented by Lew Fields and Lyle Andrews as a good risk and a canny business venture. As I write, I hear that it alone, of the six shows discussed, has flopped. Some of the skits were by Kenyon Nicholson, the dramatist; several artists collaborated on the music; several others had a hand in staging the dances and dialogue. As for the performers, they ranged all the way from Lulu McConnell, who is a sure and experienced vaudevillian, to Paul Everton, apparently recruited from heavy father rôles on the "legit"; and from Jimmy Ray, a very good soft-shoe dancer, to "M. Dalsky's Russian Choir". This is a showing more miscellaneous than is to be found normally at the Palace. Why are these performers gathered here, and why does the conglomeration call itself a revue?

One can see at once that Lulu McConnell and Jimmy Ray are better than the average Palace performers. There seems to be a good reason to promote them to a more permanent and dignified position. The revue serves as an ornamental platter in which to dish them up. It is a show window in which they are the wares for sale. And this, it is safe to say, was the consideration which appealed to Messrs. Fields and Andrews. At the same time, mindful of the irony in George White's wisecrack of a few seasons ago, "Talent is what the public wants", they were careful to provide plenty of legs, plenty of pink lights, plenty of revealing silks and bangles, all in very bad and (as they supposed) public taste. Moreover—and here is where the tired business man seems to have been even further exhausted by his own methods of high-pressure salesmanship—they slipped over a mass of mere shoddy, for padding: the soporific pomposities of the "Russian Choir"; the mewling and puking milk-soppery of the pebeco juvenile. Such a revue is dead but for individual performers. The producers consider only market values, which neither they nor anybody else understands. It is not their intelligence, it is the fortuitous skill of some of the performers which saves a few sparks of life in the dreary rubbish.

Two Negro Revues

In many ways the two Negro revues are a pleasant relief from the commercial theatre of the palefaces. The Negroes have not only a desire to make money, they have also a desire to celebrate their race. *Blackbirds* an-

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nounces itself as "Glorifying the American Negro"; and *Brown Buddies* is loosely organized around the theme of the Negro attempt to share the White man's burden during the War. These are themes with many implications, some of them terrifying; but the tribal solidarity they imply brings them to life for their performers and therefore for their audiences. The biographical notices in the program speak of apprenticeships spent in Harlem night clubs, in other Negro shows. The players are the natural entertainers of a more or less self-conscious social whole. And in addition, they are making that society within a society comprehensible to the rest of us. All of which is undeniably alive, in contrast to the puerilities and expensiveness of *The Vanderbilt Revue*; but what is the nature of that life?

"Music Halls, Circuses, American Negro orchestras, all fertilize an artist as life does. . . . These spectacles are not art. They are exciting as machines, animals, landscapes, dangers are exciting." Thus M. Jean Cocteau, in his volume of criticism, significantly entitled *A Call to Order*. The Negroes, in fact, as animals, are freer than we are; and a mutual recognition of this fact has made the success of many a hula-hula dance, many a jazz band. Both *Blackbirds* and *Brown Buddies* exploit this element. Their tom-tom rhythms and their undressed dances put to shame the business-like capering of the naked whites. It has come to the point where the Negroes know that we know that they know; and in the number entitled "Mozambique", in *Blackbirds*, I had the weary feeling that they meant it to be simply what a white public wanted. But this is the least important aspect of the Negro revue.

Much more important is their *belief* in the revue stage as a means of representing the destiny of their race; as a form of art, in a word. There is a song in *Blackbirds* entitled "Blackbirds on Parade", where the whole company, dressed as soldiers, move onto the stage and do a drill with rifles, tap steps, and mob movements, combining technical devices derived from several stages besides their own. Watching this number, it is impossible to doubt that for the performers this unanimous movement is richly symbolic in the widest sense of the word.

But when they try to be more self-conscious, as in the spectacular Heaven, Earth and Hades of the Negro race, they are not so successful. This scene shows the stage divided into three levels. On the lower is the devil, and various sins; in the middle a Harlem street; and at the top a choir of black angels. It is called a travesty of *The Green Pastures* in the program, but it is quite serious, and not without power. The trouble is that the orchestra and choir are faintly and ridiculously Wagnerian; the words of the song are in the tradition of Broadway lyrics, and the naïveté of the night-gowned black angels is badly out of place.

"But is it Art?"

I have mentioned the effective use of the tap-dancing choruses. The work of individual artists like Buck and Bubbles, the Berry Brothers, and Bill Robinson, also deserves a word. Bill Robinson's tapping, as many have said before me, is a singularly slight, elegant, and objective form of art. But these separate triumphs do not add up to form a whole. The Negro revue is in the last analysis like the white, more a show window than an art form, in spite of the infectious Negro make-believe. When the Negroes start to do something ambitious they encounter the odds and ends of the white stage, just as when they try to work out their racial destiny they find themselves turning from a rich chocolate brown to a weak tea color. In both cases their success is their finish. But the problem of a white revue that should tend to find a form for itself is quite different.

The alluring thing about revues is that most of their performers have mastered one or more techniques of the stage: they are craftsmen. A Clifton Webb is more of an

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artist, than a Katharine Cornell. The stage-struck poets I mentioned have seen this, and have tried to discover how they could use this technique for their own theatrical purposes. Mr. T. S. Eliot, discussing the possibility of poetic drama, says vigorously, "Our problem should be to take a form of entertainment, and subject it to the process which should leave it a form of art. . . . Perhaps the music hall comedian offers the best material. . . . For every person who is likely to consider it seriously there are a dozen toymakers who would leap to tickle esthetic society into one more quiver and giggle of art debauch". Mr. Eliot, perhaps fearing faddism and futility, never made the attempt; but Mr. Cummings and M. Cocteau have done so. M. Cocteau is inspired by jazz; but he says also, "What I was seeking in the circus and the music hall was not, as has so often been said, the charm of clowns and Negroes, but a lesson in equilibrium, a professional training . . ."; and Mr. Cummings means something similar when he says, in discussing his poetics, "Like the burlesk comedian, I am abnormally fond of that precision which creates movement". M. Cocteau and Mr. Cummings go to school to the precise comedian. And Mr. Cummings, in his one play, attempts to identify the poet and the vaudevillian. Perhaps he was thinking of Molière. But Mr. Cummings was never on the vaudeville stage; the latter is not the Commedia dell' Arte; Park Avenue is not the court of Louis XIV; the Bronx dwellers are not the bourgeois of seventeen-century Paris—and to discover what the revue actually tends to become, we must consult Joe Cook, Clifton Webb, and George Kaufman.

Musical Comedy, Revue, Spoken Comedy

Fine and Dandy is, I suppose, technically a musical comedy, for it has a slight plot running through it, but it may be considered one of the forms a revue tends to turn into. It utilizes a number of collaborators: book by Donald Ogden Stewart, music by Kay Swift, lyrics by Paul James; many lesser collaborators directing, designing, et cetera—and Joe Cook creating "many nonsensical moments" besides actually performing. The book at least contains some happy notions. It is for one thing a love-story in a factory, and so provides an opportunity (which the production only partly and bunglingly realizes) to explore both the mechanical and the erotic implications of jazz.

The real *raison d'être* of the performance is of course Joe Cook. He is a comic poet of the stage in the Commedia dell' Arte manner. He does not rely on wisecracks so much as he does on acrobatics and machinery: he really stages his jokes. His nonsensical machines (at once ironic comments on industry and on the subrational human machine) *present* absurdity in a way which all may enjoy and each interpret to suit himself. Mr. Cook is to be congratulated on confining himself to one medium: he is probably compelled to be an artist of the revue stage both by his talent for that form and his lack of talent in others. But his example seems to indicate that we are still producing momentary *Trufaldinos* instead of timeless *Misanthropes.*

Three's A Crowd is I suppose the best example now running of the neat, chic, well-dressed Manhattanese revue. It is an almost impudently triumphant vindication of the revue as such. Every wisecrack of Fred Allen's rings the bell: evokes its response of loud and thoughtless laughter. Libby Holman, mooing dolefully in a very good mulatto ensemble, agreeably reminds the audience of its ineffable nostalgias and its oh-so-burning desires. And Clifton Webb, elegantly spidery, partly British and partly American vaudeville, exhibits his mastery of the dance or of the well-timed retort with careless ease. And the entire production, silk curtain, stylish chorines and all, has the authentic note of "sophisticated" New Yorkishness. Even the borrowings are from the right sources.

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The bar scene, which attempts to depict the evils of debauchery in the jazz age, is very much like a similar scene in Noel Coward's *This Year of Grace*, which, in turn, was probably inspired by M. Cocteau's admirable *Bœuf sur le toit*. Such complicated pilfering is very common in the theatre, and should be applauded if the ideas develop as they pass from hand to hand. In this case M. Cocteau's piece (if it was really the grandfather of the line) has been hopelessly vulgarized and cheapened—unmistakably translated into smart Manhattan terms.

This smartness distinguishes it from, e.g., the Vanderbilt Revue. *Three's a Crowd* has a rightness different from that of any individual performer, and even from the sum of their respective *chics*. It is as a whole confidently embodying contemporary taste. The program says, "Max Gordon presents Clifton Webb, Fred Allen, and Libby Holman in a revue conceived and compiled by Howard Dietz". We may assume that Mr. Gordon was engaging in a speculation like the myopic Messrs. Fields and Andrews. But it seems that his commodity was the whole show, resulting from the collaboration of Mr. Dietz with the performers. Lacking as we do an intelligent and rich minority to dare to desire something in the theatre simply because they like it, instead of submitting weakly to the marketing of the brisk entrepreneurs, we must humbly pray for more Dietzes and Webbs to make the public take a little talent.

Once in a Lifetime is included in these notes because like revues it employs certain tricks of timing derived from vaudeville, perhaps in this case by way of *Broadway, Gentlemen of the Press* and *Spread Eagle*. The play is engaged in laughing at the movie industry, and Mr. Kaufman, who, with Mr. Hart, wrote it, appears on the stage to get something off his chest in person. He interests us at the moment as an author who has taken possession of the stage for his own purposes, only one of which is to make money. He speaks, moreover, with the confidence of one sure of being understood.

This I am afraid is because his "message" is unimportant. He is simply pointing out the absurdity of the movies. He does it so well, showing up so many aspects of that comical horror, that one is tempted to suspect him of a deeper intention: satire in the grand manner. The nut-eating simpleton who becomes a power in the industry because his brand of stupidity is shared by the general public is the stuff of which great comedy is made, but not in this play. The authors leave it at the level of social satire. Their characters turn out to have been nothing but puppets to illustrate a thesis; and when the happy ending is brutally clapped on to make Mr. Kaufman's grievances acceptable we turn away unsatisfied.

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FICTION

STAYING WITH RELATIONS *by Rose Macaulay* (LIVERIGHT. $2.50)

IN THIS book Miss Macaulay has drawn her own portrait, not for the first time. Her Claudia, she says, is "ironic, amused, passionless, detached, elegantly celibate and virgin in a world where neither state is either usual or commended, a travelled European, a bland mocker, a rather mincing young gentlewoman". The characterization might be extended to say that Miss Macaulay has abundant wit and deficient warmth, that she guards herself almost too jealously against popular sentiment and shibboleth, and that her eye for the surfaces of life is so keen as to suggest a suspicion that life may be all surface. There is something of the feminine dandy in her that faintly recalls Oscar Wilde and Max Beerbohm, but there is more of the maiden aunt—clear-eyed, imperturbable, estimating others coolly because she knows herself and gives her whole heart to no one—that brings to mind Jane Austen.

Aunt Jane would not be improved for us by translation from the Chawton vicarage into modern London, even though she might gain thereby all the superior knowledge of the world that Miss Macaulay certainly has. For one thing, and a serious one, she would be obliged to leave behind her, going on such a journey, her neat little bundle of conventional beliefs. Yet we feel sure that even today Jane Austen would keep her head—and her heart. She would still combat all excessive heat with light, enthusiasm with raillery, and sentimental nonsense with quiet good taste. So does Miss Macaulay. And it would not much matter to us what Jane Austen might write about if she were with us now, or whether she had a story to tell, or whether she were well furnished with ideas. It would be enough for a great many readers merely to associate with a person of her shrewd observation and good breeding. So it is as we read *Crewe Train, Told by an Idiot, Daisy and Daphne*, and *Staying with Relations*.

There is, in fact, rather more event in the present story than Miss Macaulay has usually employed—a treasure hunt, the unmasking of an American sharper, and a pursuit, all rather mildly exciting and beside the point. So far as ideas are concerned, she is still content with the one she has urged in half a dozen other books, that nearly all generalization is foolish and fallacious. Judging from her iteration one is tempted to think that she would like to destroy the generalizing faculty—surely a useful tool of thought, however it may be abused, and one we have been at some pains to fashion. Her heroine, a rather pallid English novelist who has piqued herself upon always perceiving "between one person and another those little differences which it takes the observant and careful eye to remark", is led through a series of blunders in social judgment which are all attributed to the folly of generalizing and her tendency to see every one as representative of a "type". At last she is instructed: "You call every one a type. That's where you're hopelessly out. There are no types, and no groups. Only a haphazard crowd of eccentrics, each odder than the next. We can't even understand or classify ourselves and our own reactions, let alone any one else's". Thus Miss Macaulay illustrates that "isolation of the individual" which Mr.

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Chesterton, in a recent article in THE BOOKMAN, has called a characteristic of our age. But, of course, if she is right in her attack upon generalization then Mr. Chesterton is wrong, for in that case our age has no characteristics whatever and all that we may say about it is an impertinence.

Miss Macaulay has "got up" her Guatemalan scenes, her Mayan archeology, and her Southern California with sufficient accuracy, and she likes to be accurate. Her handling of American idiom is on this account the more amusing. Embedded in an English so unerring and crisp and distinguished as hers—what other woman is writing so well just now, unless it be Virginia Woolf?—her "American" is by contrast grotesquely unsure. To a native ear it is about as convincing as would be the Italian of an equally intelligent Englishwoman just arrived in Florence from Hugo's foreign-language emporium in Oxford Street. Like many other English novelists who have discovered that we do not speak quite the dialect of Bloomsbury, whatever that is, she has been impressed by our frequent use of the word "guess", but she does not seem to know that our use of it is often correct, as in the sentence she puts into the mouth of a "realtor" from Santa Barbara: "We're Methodist Episcopal. I guess you're Protestant Episcopal; the English visitors all seem to be that". (A little more of this, and Bloomsbury will be frightened into abandoning a valuable word altogether.) Miss Macaulay is also aware that some Americans, not quite all, still use the old past participle "gotten", but how they use it she has not learned. "That sense of smell we've gotten, I certainly think it's more a curse than a blessing," says the realtor. And finally, although it must be admitted that our profane swearing has fallen away sadly in recent decades, Miss Macaulay is unjust in implying that our better-bred girls who go in for profanity at all have been reduced to a single mild expletive. "Oh, you're lazy as hell. All you Britishers are slack as hell." . . . "Hell, no. I'm not going to talk for you all to laugh at. I'm not standing for it. . . . The kid's the only one who's gotten sense." . . . "Why, hell, you know as well as I do that hare and rabbit fur are just utterly revolting and cheesy." Thus intones the beautiful Isie, in a sort of moronic litany. Well, it is not fair to us, for our younger generation can do much better than that. Probably it was not intended to be fair. Miss Macaulay titillates her English readers by the conventional ridicule of Americanisms which, since the time of Mrs. Trollope, has not needed to be accurate in order to be effective, and she placates the American reader by showing English people of culture "playing the silly ass". Thus every one is made happy—and *Staying with Relations* is likely to succeed. On nearly every count, certainly every important one, it richly deserves to succeed.

ODELL SHEPARD

THE VILLAGE BOOK *by Henry Williamson* (DUTTON. $2.50)

THE village appears to be on the Devonshire coast within sight of Lundy Island. The book covers a period of nine years' writing, is composed of alternate passages—"Spirit of the Village", dealing with people, and "Fields and the Sea", dealing with nature—and is confined to the seasons of winter and spring. The distinguishing characteristic of "Spirit of the Village" is observation—wide, generous, and accurate; its narrative passages (for Mr. Williamson prefers the form of fiction whenever he can use it) are just a little better than very good reporting, which is praise enough; and the descriptive passages, though they are often self-conscious and over-careful, strike a middle course between the deplorable—and in English "village" literature deplorably frequent—extremes of brutality and sentimentality. Observation such as this is an excellent substitute for imagination up to a point,

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but it must be admitted that Williamson never really gets beneath the surface of his village life. And those who find this surface fascinating and would like to know what lies beneath, should turn to the novels of that amazing genius, T. F. Powys.

"Fields and the Sea" is somewhat indebted to Jefferies, no easy master. Jefferies could squeeze color out of a word as one squeezes paint out of a tube; his prose is a series of splendid—sometimes even delicate—escapes from sheer tawdriness. Williamson could not be tawdry if he wished, which is surely a good left-handed reason for not imitating Jefferies. On the other hand he achieves whole passages in which, after a careful search for the exact word, he succeeds in gathering into each sentence a number of minute and diverse sounds. It is the prose of a man with ordinary eyesight, but excellent ears. He *discovers* the familiar sounds of the countryside for us, and since discovery of the familiar is the alpha and omega of good unscientific nature writing, "Fields and the Sea" has a quiet and uncommon distinction.

GEORGE DANGERFIELD

A WOMAN WITH WHITE EYES *by Mary Borden* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.00)

THE method of this novel is an extraordinarily deft instance of condensed and patterned impressionism. Confronted with the problem of telling the interwoven life stories of two American women against a complex background of English society before the World War, Mary Borden has one of them, Caroline Merryweather, who has survived both the war and the post-war period, retire to the isolation of a New England village and there attempt to find herself by reviewing her amazing memories in the form of a passionately introspective letter addressed to nobody in particular.

The burden of this letter, which constitutes the entire novel, is what Life does to those who are drawn into its intricate clutches and are incapable of achieving the mystical aloofness of the mystical Finn, Dr. Tawaska; and cannot accept the simple piety of the little Catholic Abbé of the Rue de St.-Pères, or of the puritanical old maid, Elizabeth Perkins, or of Caroline's old Swiss nurse; and have too much self-respect to let themselves go in the fashion of Marcella Mackintosh, grotesque Lesbian circus-woman of post-war Paris. Life wounded Caroline because she had no real centrality, but has been always an irrational compound of curious forces—the wildness of her Red Indian blood, the prudishness of her upbringing, the sophistication incident to wealth and travel and social prestige. Her affair with Hugo, elderly member of the British Cabinet, her bearing of a birth-strangled child, her absurd married life with the horse-trader Jock Bailey, her experience as nurse and prostitute during the war, her debauched drifting with Marcella's set—all this seems to her, in retrospect, an inexplicable dream. The one reality of her life has been her friendship with Maggie. And Life wounded Maggie even more outrageously, because she had too much centrality, because her whole existence was a passionate reckless absorption in one man, her second husband, Buck Dawson. As the American lady of this hard-riding, fast-living English gentleman of the Midlands, she tried to pit her unconventional monogamous emotionalism against the complex double sex standard of a sophisticated social order she did not understand, and met with undeserved and terrible disaster.

While patly modern in its impressionism, the novel avoids stylistic experimentation and keeps to a prose that is clear and idiomatic. But otherwise—in its conception of character and in its underlying philosophy—the modernism of the novel is extreme. Most of the characters lack either a sense of humor that keeps emotion from kicking over traces and reason from succumbing to false concepts, or a will that acts as a deterrent to

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irrational impulse. The philosophy which Life has taught Caroline is a morbid pessimism which absolves the individual of any responsibility for whatever sordid tragedy may befall him, and the philosophy which she has derived from Dr. Tawaska is a mysticism that confuses neurotic hallucination with true spiritual insight.

For its novelty of method and excellence of style, its amazing range and contrast of character portraits, its acute consciousness of the impact of human lives on one another, and its uncanny insight into American feminine psychology and the English social order, the novel is well worth reading; but, having read it, one will question the completeness of the creative vision that has left so much out of the composition of Caroline and Maggie, Hugo, Buck Dawson and Jock Bailey, and the profundity of the philosophic viewpoint that takes the thinking of Caroline and Dr. Tawaska overseriously. The mind of such a woman as Caroline Merryweather at the age of sixty is too muddy a mirror to reflect Life and character steadily and reflect them whole.

JOE LEE DAVIS

SUCCESS *by Lion Feuchtwanger* (VIKING. $3.00)

SEARCHING for the kernel of this novel is about as exasperating an experience as peeling an onion. One strips off innumerable layers of fact and purpose without appearing to strike a center. Whether satire, or prophecy, or romance, or psychology is the main object it is hard to determine. However, we may as well begin our review with the story of how Martin Krüger, a director in the National Gallery at Munich, brings down the anger of the Philistine officials of Bavaria by displaying certain revolutionary canvases. They determine to get rid of him, and succeed in having him convicted and imprisoned on a false charge of perjury. While Krüger lies in prison, his mistress, Johanna Krain, sets out to see that justice is done. She involves herself with a vast number of influential persons—writers, manufacturers, theatrical people, government officials, and financiers—whom even the dullest reader will recognize as types of post-war Bavarians. Thereafter we are largely diverted from the Krüger case itself to a comment upon justice and manners in that confused era following the war.

This comment, as I have said, takes many shapes. In its satirical aspect, it resembles the writings of Sinclair Lewis, and one is astonished to learn that Munich, like Zenith, is ridden by fat-heads and stuffed-shirts, and beset by stupidity and hypocrisy. Of Feuchtwanger's many rôles, I think he is most entertaining and successful in the character of satirist. The robes of prophecy do not fit him so well. He falls considerably short of the detachment of a good Jeremiah. Too often one detects him in secret enjoyment of the political intrigues, degenerate entertainments and the like, which presumably he despises. It is a case of ambiguous motives; sensationalism mixed up with reform. Beware the writer who condemns and flatters in one voice.

However, Feuchtwanger's principal object seems (I say *seems* because I am not sure that I have found the central motive of the narrative) not to satirize or inveigh against ephemeral evils, but to make a generalization about society as a whole. He wants to show that justice really depends upon the actions of individuals and that, since individuals are selfish, society is irreparably unjust. It also appears that Feuchtwanger, with an eye to sociology, wants to establish his conclusion upon a large number of observed cases. And perhaps he would have this scheme account for the very, very large quantity of unrelated characters and incidents in his novel. But the fatuity of this idea, both as a principle of structure and a method of philosophic generalization, is so evident that I am almost inclined to think I have misread the novel. If the observed cases are all fic-

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tional, it will not strengthen the conclusion merely to multiply the cases. And since the characters are but distantly, if at all, related, the novel will have about as much unity as the telephone directory, or life itself.

Despite its show of scientific probity, of psychology, of moral conviction and prophetic fire, I cannot regard this novel as anything more than a rather loud explosion of German humbug. In the first place, the characters are interesting only as abstract studies in psychology. In spite of an exception here and there, they are not creations. Feuchtwanger has a rather remarkable knowledge of human nature, but he lacks the imagination to create it.

The book, moreover, is appalling in its lack of art. The story is hammered out in shiftless and inadequate sentences, without style, form, or relief. The facts of the narrative are all that apparently interests this writer. Like a teamster with a load of gravel to deliver, he simply opens his mind and dumps on paper a mass of raw and unsifted matter.

The novel has always been a rather ramshackle mansion in the house of literature, but those wandering "epics" of the last century, if they lacked the close structure of a play, had style at least, and charm and order in the parts. Feuchtwanger's book is at once amorphous as a whole and without beauty in its parts. Its artlessness, I think, and not its bogus philosophizing, is the main issue against it.

FREDERICK DUPEE

AMBITION *by Bernhard Guttmann* (HARPERS. $2.50)

THIS historical novel of seventeenth-century Prussia won the prize offered by Harpers to German biographers and novelists. It gives an absorbing picture of the Berlin Court from about 1685, through the eventful year of 1688 when the Great Elector died, to the first campaign on the Rhine against the French carried on by Frederick, his son, later to become Frederick I, first King of Prussia.

No single character monopolizes the story; nor does the action lead up to a single dramatic event. There are neither swashbuckling heroes nor dastardly villains. The Great Elector, old and dying; the vain ambitious Frederick and his wife, Sophia Charlotte, pupil of Leibnitz and proud of being a bluestocking; the philosopher Thomasius, founder of the University of Halle and circumspect liberal; Altorf, the secretary, and his love, Erdmute von Bellin; these occupy the primary places in a story in which scores of other characters play important parts.

Ambition is in the new tradition of the historical novel. It is reminiscent of Feuchtwanger's *Power*, but it carves its own path. Indeed, it carries the method a step further in that Herr Gutmann does not hang his study on any one individual.

THE BIG BARN *by Walter D. Edmonds* (LITTLE, BROWN. $2.00)

MR. EDMOND'S second novel is neither as colorful nor as convincing as *Rome Haul*. It attempts more and it achieves much less. *The Big Barn* is a dramatic novel with an historic setting laid in the northern New York of the fifties and sixties. Ralph Wilder, a forbidding old patriarch, a rich farmer who, as his final monument, is building the biggest barn ever heard of in that section, turns out to be only an old man with a rough exterior but a heart of gold. He has two sons. Henry is a bookish dilettante who dislikes the farm. Bascom is a rather engaging Yankee Don Juan. Rose marries Henry in girlhood innocence but when she comes to live with her husband's family she falls in love with Bascom. And he falls in love with her. Bascom, however, is already involved in another affair with the wife of a small farmer in the district. The Civil War inter-

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venes. Many of the incidents and situations turn out to be quite pointless, like the false trails in a detective story, but the genuine complications are resolved in ways more melodramtic than satisfying to the critical reader, who is led to expect, in the face of Mr. Edmond's undoubted abilities, something better.

FRED T. MARSH

BURNT OFFERING *by Jeanne Galzy* (BRENTANO. $2.50)

THE second annual award of the Prix Brentano, founded in 1928 "to encourage Franco-American cultural relations", goes to a woman novelist whose reputation, despite the fact that this is her eighth book, is not as yet widely established in France. Madame Galzy, herself a teacher, describes rather poignantly the bleak existence of Marie Pascal, in charge of the seventh grade in a school of Amiens, whose vague maternal solicitude, awakened by each succeeding class, gradually centers upon one child, the eager little Antoinette Rieu. When Antoinette is stricken with pneumonia, Marie's passion betrays her, and after having saved her pupil's life she is coldly dismissed from the position she had faithfully occupied for nine years. Confessedly "an ardent feminist", the author has so shamelessly espoused the cause of "woman's right to motherhood" that her book, faintly recalling Bourget's *The Disciple*, narrowly escapes the damning classification of a problem novel. The characters all sacrifice reality to stand as types: Marie, the frustrated old maid, Mme Rieu, the selfish mother, Mlle Wiel-Lévy, the ecstatic convert, Antoinette, the precocious little girl. The child's illness, which structurally and spiritually forms the climax of the action, is too tritely facile to be moving, and the opposition between the two mother-loves requires a more skilful handling. Moreover "the French countryside", which becomes increasingly indispensable in French novels of late, is sketched with an economy of line comparable to "that of a blank sheet of paper". Jacques le Clercq's translation, as always, maintains the requisite quality of complete smoothness.

JUSTIN O'BRIEN

PIED PIPER *by Daphne Muir* (HOLT. $2.50)

IN HER first book, Mrs. Muir wrote of her native South Africa. In her second she has gone far afield in both time and place, the Children's Crusade being the setting for her story of a boy and girl who led their respective groups from France and Germany in this futile attempt to wrest the Holy Land from the infidel. The story is told with a sensitiveness to sound and color emphasized by a figurative language that is at times extravagant, yet never too extravagant. The gathering of the children; the exodus from their native lands, like the hordes that followed the mythical Pied Piper; the hardships unbearable, and the destruction of thousands upon thousands of young boys and girls through starvation, disease, murder and heartbreak make as vivid and tragic a story as history can bring to us. The first half of the book paints this picture in all of its beautiful ugliness.

In the second half, Mrs. Muir will disappoint many of her readers. Through shipwreck and piracy, all of the children are either lost or sold into slavery except Stephen, of France, and Charla, of Germany, the one a shepherd boy who saw the Archangel Michael; the other a child baroness who ran away from an unhappy home. The adventures of these two lead the story away from that of the Crusade into one of romance, and the reader feels that in deserting the historical, or semi-historical, for pure fiction, however it remains in the spirit of the Crusade, the unity of the book is lost. What happened to these hordes of children who crossed the mountains and the sea to reach Palestine has never been fully known. If she wishes to, the author has every right to nar-

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row the army down to two, and carry them on through the Promised Land, but she would have carried her wonderfully strong beginning into a stronger ending if she had not altered her tone.

MYRA M. WATERMAN

WIND FROM THE WEST *by Pamela Hinkson* (MACMILLAN. $2.00)

BEHOLDING this sad mixture of the novel of social thesis and the dreamy love story, we hardly know whether to regret the impulse that has driven a romantic to have a "purpose" in her story or the unreflective enthusiasm of the reformer which finds in a word the mystic key to the universe. "Freedom" is the mystic word that pipes through the lives of Solange and her dead mother Marguerite in the west wind from America. Both were enslaved to the past by old Madame Lassage's tireless guardianship of the name of De Mauges. Her mother died still unfree, but to Solange "freedom" comes in the shape of Peter Quincy, the personal representative of "American energy and force of will". He conquers, and Solange, once a demure and featureless *jeune fille*, is now free to wear short skirts and live in New England instead of Brittany.

LESLIE AULT

GLASS MOUNTAIN *by Joseph Warren Beach* (MACRAE-SMITH. $2.50)

ONE of the reviewing practices which age cannot wither is an indiscriminate use of the equivocal "promising" in commenting on first novels; but when the book under discussion is by a Professor of English who is also the author of four literary critiques of some note, it is no longer the better part of wisdom to take flimsy refuge behind a critical cliché. *Glass Mountain* is the product of a critic turned creator, and as such automatically exposes itself to a more serious and less evasive analysis. Embarrassed by a threadbare theme and a disappointing leaning toward longwindedness, but flecked with passages of exquisite tenderness, this remains a work of shifting, uncertain values.

This novel is the story of Norma Harder, whose defiant and unconventional temperament enabled her to give up her artist-husband, Max, with the same generous love that had won him. Norma's second marriage to Jimmie Wardroper, an art critic, results in a torturing conflict within herself, a searing struggle between her former love for Max and her new love for Wardroper. Ultimately, the ghost of Max is successfully exorcized, and the book ends on Norma's tardy realization of the urgency of the living present as opposed to the dead past.

It is perhaps not completely fair to Dr. Beach to arbitrarily reduce his crowded canvas to the banality of a triangular relationship. The spiritual continuity of the story is unhappily interrupted by minor characters who indulge in metaphysical conversations. The motley gathering of sophisticates, eager Don Juans, quasi-metaphysicians and conscientiously Bohemian artists, who scrape noisily in and out of a Paris *pension*, sidetracks the central characters needlessly. We grow irritated: ours is the simple desire to follow the careers of the hero and heroine.

However, no one dare deny that the prose in this book is often compellingly beautiful. Indeed, it may be said that only in the recording of conversation does the author's hand grow unsteady, and his people orate rather than talk. There are times when we lose patience with Dr. Beach's voluble creations. Thus, when the dénouement is about to be unveiled, Norma says to the adoring but diffident Wardroper: "But don't you know that no woman wants—to be brought around—don't you know that a woman wants—to be taken by storm!" We may be carping at peccadillos; but this is a speech which might easily be accredited to novelists of such dubious merit as Faith Baldwin or Elinor Glynn. And it is here, predominantly, that this book

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earns the adjectives lethargic and heavy-handed. The creator has forgotten the critic.

Nor has Dr. Beach realized his characters. The egocentric, talented, sensual artist, Max, is painted with heavy, obscuring brush strokes, while the second husband, despite page after page of analysis, is drawn with such sketchy, indecisive lines that he rarely emerges as a living creation. Only Norma, who tried to blend a pagan philosophy with a womanly dependence of spirit, is seen as a living, three-dimensional figure. The remaining characters wander aimlessly to and fro in the murky light of their own gossip. It is an uneven, indeterminate book, that could have been narrated less protractedly and still have lost none of its remarkable psychological and spiritual implications.

WILLIAM J. FADIMAN

THE WATER GIPSIES *by A. P. Herbert* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

JANE, the housemaid, tires (and we cannot blame her) of the tedium of the scullery. And she tires of her two young men: Fred, the obtuse bargeman, and Ernest, the unlovely socialist. She has been much to the cinema, where her father plays the 'cello, and has definite ideas about how life might be lived and love enjoyed. While the two young workingmen love Jane, she loves the Honorable George Gordon Bryan, an artist in spite of his noble blood. From housemaid she raises her status to artist's model and life begins to look as attractive to her as the pictures. But things never end in life as they do on the screen, and although she pursues Bryan with considerable spunk the evasive young man sidesteps her. For no particular reason she marries Ernest, a pathetic and comic character who dies a pathetic and comic death. Having lost Ernest by death and Mr. Bryan by flight, Jane settles down to marry Fred and to be a bargeman's wife, which sounds much more romantic than artist's mistress.

The tale runs along merrily, filled with odd "characters", inns, beer, skittles, horse and dog races, betting, Sunday excursions on the Thames. It has something of Dickens's spirit, but is amusingly lacking in sentimentality. There is no doubt but that it is a good funny story—but it would be twice as funny in England, where such things as Derby Day and dog racing are a part of the general background. Tragedy is more easily transplanted than comedy.

Mr. Herbert has long been associated with *Punch*. If you like *Punch* better than *The New Yorker*, here is the book for you.

ESTHER FORBES

THEY THOUGHT THEY COULD BUY IT *by Dorothy Walworth Carman* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.00)

HERE is an old theme that has been pleasantly freshened. The story concerns itself with three young couples who represent the three strata to be found in any American suburb and focuses upon the women involved—upon Joyce of the Country Club crowd, whose ephemeral happiness is sacrificed because of the husband's success; upon Lydia, the pseudo-intellectual faddist, and upon Amelia, who lives on the wrong side of the railroad track and bears more babies than her income and her health can afford. All are searching for a happiness that none quite finds. The life in the suburb is essentially artificial. The Country Club crowd never eats the cookie but scallops its edges with tiny bites; feverishly active people are forever dodging reality; mothers who throw themselves into the lives of their children find that they are executing high dives into shallow pools; neither the keeping nor the disregarding of conventions brings contentment.

They Thought They Could Buy It would perhaps be a better novel if the author had chosen one of the couples as her principals and had thrown the other two into the back-

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ground. Mrs. Carman handles satire adroitly. Though she is never cruel, she does not permit herself the auctorial privilege of whitewashing human motives, nor does she offer some pat solution for the problems she presents. The book, though not important in itself, is an important chip in the mosaic that may some day give the picture of American life in the twentieth century.

EUDORA RAMSAY RICHARDSON

WOMEN AND MONKS *by Joseph Kallinikov* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $3.75)

TO THE pretensions this book makes to explain the Russian revolution and the flowering of a new society, there is nothing for an American reader to say, except that the logic of the events described is not very convincing. Its eight hundred and seventy-three large pages have no weight either as social document or as muck-raking among the monks. In essence, or at least in English, Kallinikov is a kind of Russian Boccaccio with Soviet prejudices; that is, he novelizes folk-tales and seasons them with socialism.

The folk-tales are entertaining, spicy and boisterous; the tragedy and suffering which, in the old Russian custom, they involve, simply add richer color without at all interfering with the reader's pleasure. Even the monastic corruption, exhibited with a wealth of detail like that of a Vice Committee's report, is gusty rather than disgusting. Such a book is not an object for literary criticism, except in that negative mode whereby criticism disclaims all responsibility for both form and content, and issues the simple recommendation: for people who like this sort of thing, this is the sort of thing they like. Those with more serious interests, scholars for example, might well compare the treatment of the December and May theme in Chaucer, Boccaccio, Restoration Comedy, and Kallinikov. Some argument might be extended to show that Kallinikov writes the purer farce.

R. P. BLACKMUR

PHILIPPA *by Anne Douglas Sedgwick* (HOUGHTON MIFFLIN. $2.50)

THOSE of Miss Sedgwick's readers who have found it necessary to qualify a real appreciation of her earlier work by saying that she seems, at times, a trifle saccharine, will not, it is to be feared, respond to *Philippa*. While reading the book it is difficult to understand why the Victorian era is considered more sentimental than the present one. For it would be hard indeed to find in that much-maligned epoch a novel in which the tears flowed more freely than they do in this one. But sorrow is not too monotonously depicted; we are allowed to witness "delicious tears", "convulsive sobbing" and "hysteric cries". While at times the feminine characters are lying upon their beds, sunk in "weltering grief", they are again courageously choking back the tears, flicking them from gleaming lashes, or brushing them furtively away with the back of the hand. Cruel seductress and saintly wife weep with equal abandon. Many of us had forgotten—if we ever knew—how effective a *motif* tears can become in a work of fiction.

Judging from *Philippa*, this is still a hard life for women. One would never dream that woman claims to have acquired a wide range of interests, a sense of values, poise, independence, and a philosophic outlook. The only evidence of emancipation here is a certain extension of territory; women can, in short, make themselves unpleasant with less restraint in more places.

However just a view this is of feminine progress (and the biographies of Isadora Duncan suggest there is something in it), Miss Sedgwick's solemn treatment of it seems scarcely adequate. And the conversation in *Philippa* (this is a very "talky" book) is so studded with conscious epigram and literary allusion that one longs for an Admirable Crichton among the characters to do a little timely ducking. A certain studied brightness was understandable in *The Little French*

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Girl, speaking and acting, as she must, in a medium wholly foreign to her; but the same effect in young Philippa, utterly at home in her environment, is not so pleasing.

The actual story of Philippa is slight. It concerns itself almost wholly with the type of quadrangle that so often, in the light of the new psychology, supplants the ancient triangle—the man, his wife, his lover, and his daughter. The tale is a record of the bitter recriminations of the three women over the one man. Unfortunately for the convincingness of the novel, it would scarcely be possible to imagine a more desiccated hero. That one woman should be passionately concerned about him is fiction enough; but that three should be is phantasy.

RUTH FRISBIE MOORE

THE WATERS UNDER THE EARTH
by Martha Ostenso (DODD, MEAD. $2.50)

IT IS the purpose of Miss Ostenso in her newest novel to champion the revolt of her pretty and wilful heroine, Carlotta Welland, against the stern and ruinous domination of the Welland family by her puritanical father. Mr. Welland is such a zealous Christian that by a fanatical application of his Old Testament ethics he succeeds in frustrating the lives of his six elder children in varying degrees. Then Carlotta, the seventh, comes along. She is both more attractive and more self-reliant than the others; she avoids open conflict with her father but manages in all important matters to have her way. As she grows up she arranges to be given the college education that the other children had lacked and, when the time comes, instead of marrying the respectable playmate of her childhood, she goes to the lover on whom she has set her heart. Anyone will see that Carlotta is a very subjective heroine indeed. It would seem that Miss Ostenso, in recording the slow triumph of her paragon over such an unpopular figure as a puritanical father, and in championing the cause of rebellious youth, has found the formula for another success with her large public, which is doubtless composed for the most part of heroine-worshipping young women.

GERALD SYKES

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BIOGRAPHY

MARY BAKER EDDY *by Lyman P. Powell* (MACMILLAN. $5.00)

ACCORDING TO THE FLESH: A BIOGRAPHY OF MARY BAKER EDDY *by Fleta Campbell Springer* (COWARD-MCCANN. $3.00)

To WRITE a satisfactory biography of Mary Baker Eddy more is needed than an acquaintance with the facts of her life. The truth of this, though self-evident, has not been sufficiently appreciated. If it had, less importance would be attached to whether or not the biographer had access to certain guarded archives. Less dispute would involve those obscurities in Mrs. Eddy's career where it is possible for her followers and her enemies to make statements that directly disagree. It is more than likely that the ideal biography of Mrs. Eddy will be written by one of insight and culture to whom documents will be of secondary importance and who will be relatively unconcerned as to whether she loved her second husband, neglected her son, lost possession of her faculties in extreme old age, or even whether she was able to effect permanent cures by faith. The ideal biographer will consider Mrs. Eddy primarily as the founder of a religion, approaching her with the respect and love that are due one who was able to convince so many that she conversed with God. He will determine what it was, in her character as well as her experience, that led to her faith in faith-healing; and he will then judge the essential nature of the religion that she founded, whether it was worldly or unworldly, local or universal, noble or vulgar, bold or halfway. In addition to this, he will consider Mrs. Eddy and Christian Science as phenomena of American culture, since it is manifest that both could have sprung up and flourished in no other soil than our own.

What Dr. Powell has written about Mrs. Eddy is not a biography but an official panegyric. It might be likened to the Timothy Cole engraving of Mrs. Eddy at the time when she had come to be known by her followers as "Mother". Fortunately Dr. Powell's book contains both the engraving and the original photograph from which it was made. Thus it is possible, by comparing them, to see not only what change the artist has wrought but what change was officially desired by the Christian Science Church. Any one can see how Cole has filled out Mrs. Eddy's cheeks, brightened her eyes, and even polished the cross on her breast. The simplest thing that can be said of Dr. Powell's book is that it is a similar work of prettification.

Mrs. Springer's book is naturally more readable, since it deals with a human being rather than with the mother of a fond and ambitious church. Mrs. Springer seems conscientiously to have tried to be impartial, while reserving the right to her own opinion on certain aspects of Mrs. Eddy's life. It cannot be said, however, that she has exhibited any remarkable degree of insight. She has shown little appreciation of Mrs. Eddy as one with a religious mission. In fact, in understanding Mrs. Eddy she is limited for the most part to that knowledge which every woman seems to have of every other woman in her relation to men. One feels that both of these biographies have failed to add to our essential understanding of Mrs. Eddy. And neither has touched upon her extremely significant relation to American life.

GERALD SYKES

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A ROVING COMMISSION *by Winston S. Churchill* (SCRIBNER'S. $3.50)

THIS is the story, and it is about as interesting and exciting a story as could well be imagined, of Winston Churchill's early career in the army and in journalism. It is a brilliant and vivid narrative packed with action, illuminated by graphic description, and enlivened by shrewd and often humorous comment. The youthful Churchill had a tremendous zest for life and he has managed to impart much of the spirit which made him so eager for experience and adventure to this unusual autobiography.

After Harrow and Sandhurst this fortunate and gifted son of British aristocracy went straight into the army and soon found himself, as young English officers usually do, in India. Even before this he had had his first taste of war as an observer in Cuba, and thereafter he succeeded in being on hand wherever fighting was in order. He was with the Malakand Field Force in its operations on India's Northwest Frontier, took part in the Egyptian campaign against Omduran, and in one capacity or another went through the Boer War in South Africa. Captured by the Boers in the early days of this latter conflict, he succeeded in escaping from Pretoria. When peace was finally in sight he quit the army definitely and turned to politics. The book ends with his first election to the House of Commons.

So much active service did not come to one young man without the pulling of a good many strings. In most of his campaigns Churchill served in the ambiguous status of officer-correspondent. How he managed to secure these appointments while his own regiment remained on inactive duty at Bangalore is the most amazing part of his whole story. He knew everybody of importance in England through his family connections and did not hesitate to use this influence at every stage of his career. His persistence and effrontery in demanding the special privileges which made his wide experience possible pass all understanding. He did not hesitate to go over the head of Kitchener and appeal to the Prime Minister when the former did not welcome his presence in the Egyptian army. However fascinated we may be with what Churchill did, the impression cannot be avoided that he was a singularly pushing and cock-sure young man. Everything he undertook resulted in great personal triumph, whether it was playing polo in India or electrifying England by his war dispatches, but to many persons with whom he came in contact he must have seemed a most obnoxious self-seeker. But his story is told with such frankness and charm that its appeal, especially to those with any spirit of adventure, cannot be resisted.

FOSTER RHEA DULLES

PEPYS: HIS LIFE AND CHARACTER *by John Drinkwater* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $3.00)

JOHN DRINKWATER, who has already treated the widely various characters of Mary Stuart, Oliver Cromwell, Charles James Fox, Abraham Lincoln, Robert E. Lee and Lord Byron, turns his attention in his latest volume to the colorful personality of Samuel Pepys. As usual, Mr. Drinkwater's contribution to the literature of his subject is critical rather than scholarly. With the exception of the great diary itself, the material for the present study is drawn largely from secondary sources. Even the interpretations are solidly founded upon earlier conjectures. The results justify the method. Mr. Drinkwater has given us a new and thoughtful and sympathetic portrait of the busy little Navy official who, while revealing his soul so candidly to posterity, damaged his character considerably in the eyes of future generations.

Samuel Pepys is commonly regarded as an amusing little man who had many amiable weaknesses. Under Mr. Drinkwater's

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treatment Pepys's weaknesses appear less the laughable failures of an inconsequential person than the doubts and frailties of a strong and conscientious man. Mr. Drinkwater has concentrated on phases of Pepys's character and achievements which are, if anything, under-stressed in the diary. By recalling to us the long and faithful years of public service, the steadfastness of Pepys as a civil administrator and a member of Parliament, his courage in the time of the Plague, even in the face of his own abject terror, Drinkwater has presented a figure of considerable dignity, much closer on the whole to tragedy than to comedy.

Mr. Drinkwater's interpretation alters nothing perhaps so much as the accepted version of Pepys's relations to his wife. Though he was quarrelsome and unfaithful, though he was tormented by a jealousy which he knew to be unreasonable, these things were only the superficial and rather laughable aspects of an association which was built upon love and mutual dependence. Pepys himself summarized his own marriage superlatively well: "For my part I and my wife will keep to one another and let the world go hang, for there is nothing but falseness in it".

MARGARET WALLACE

JEB STUART *by John W. Thomason, Jr.* (SCRIBNER'S. $5.00)

"If we oppose force to force we cannot win, for their resources are greater than ours. . . . We must substitute *esprit* for numbers."

This brace of sentences embodies the whole spirit and substance of Captain John W. Thomason's excellent biography of J. E. B. Stuart, chief of Confederate cavalry during the Civil War. It is a soldierly, fast-marching account of the miracles performed by Confederate horsemen, led by their thirty-year-old centaur-general against appalling odds. Whatever was lacking in equipment, food or numbers—and apparently at no time during the war was the Confederate cavalry adequately clothed, fed, or mounted—Jeb Stuart made up the deficit out of his own hard-riding spirit. He was the very symbol of Southern gentility fighting against encroachment on the doctrine of State's rights. He led his men to battle as to a fox hunt, held them joyously to hopeless odds and "fought light cavalry as nobody has fought it since Napoleon's time".

Captain Thomason presents the rare and pleasing spectacle of a soldier who knows his military science and writes admirably about it, but in describing campaigns and battles Captain Thomason never loses sight of the men in them. The author introduces a necessary minimum of political background and a small group of adroitly sketched supporting actors, all centering upon the character and exploits of a very real hero. *Jeb Stuart* is a model of military biography, a fascinating study of a war and a man.

HENRY MORTON ROBINSON

HENRY WHITE: THIRTY YEARS OF AMERICAN DIPLOMACY *by Allan Nevins* (HARPERS. $5.00)

The lives of good men generally do not make fascinating reading, and Henry White was a very good man. Diplomatic biographies —except such a *lusus naturae* as Harold Nicolson's *Portrait of a Diplomatist*—are notoriously dull, and Henry White was our greatest pre-war diplomat. Accordingly, Mr. Nevins's biography of White must be taken as the payment of a debt to history rather than as a bid for public interest.

Henry White's diplomatic career spanned our growth to nationhood and culminated with the Paris Peace Conference, where he served the Wilsonians as a sort of captive balloon from which to observe the Republican Party. Prior to that he had served his country in the Embassy at London, as Ambassador to Italy, and at the Conference of Algeciras. His was the greatest mode of diplomacy, that which is based on friendliness

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and honor. He had a genius for friendship and it is no exaggeration to say that the settlement of the Venezuela difficulty with England was due primarily to his personal acquaintance with the English statesman of his day. This book reveals how White, although ousted from the diplomatic service, was used by Olney in preference to Ambassador Bayard in handling this question. His rôle at Algeciras has, unfortunately, been over-estimated. On the other hand, Henry White's share in the Peace Conference, particularly his correspondence with Lodge and other Republican leaders, has been underestimated. This correspondence further reveals the basis for the break between Wilson and Colonel House and is a genuine contribution.

Mr. Nevins has performed a useful service in setting down the facts of the career of this genial, lovable, self-effacing man, who was styled by Colonel House "the most accomplished diplomatist this country has ever produced". He is thereby giving the nation a juster estimate of diplomacy, as the art, not of outwitting another nation, but of settling differences of opinion between nations, without vehemence, rancor or essential injustice. Of the latter type of diplomacy, Henry White was the supreme exemplar of his day.

JOHN CARTER

GEORGE WASHINGTON: COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF *by Thomas G. Frothingham* (MACMILLAN. $5.00)

IN JUST under four hundred pages Mr. Frothingham outlines Washington as a commander of armies, his education and early experience under arms and his eleven years active campaigning in the Revolution. It was a job that needed doing and has been well done. Too many recent books about the father of his country lose themselves in trivialities or, worse, in guess work. Mr. Frothingham sticks to facts and replaces guess work with reasoned analysis. He traces the astonishingly early development of Washington's character and personal influence and clearly sets forth his amazing feat in keeping his ragged handful of an army together through seven years of difficulty and discouragement, wisely adapting his small means to wise ends, and winning Yorktown at last.

Mr. Frothingham's sober analysis makes short work of the contention of Woodward (whom he does not name) to the effect that Washington should merely have harassed the British by raids and skirmishes instead of fighting battles. He easily shows that bushwhacking alone could not have kept the Revolution alive without an organized force to back it, that without such a force steadily opposing the British armies the rebellion would politically have collapsed, for rebellions (being moral revolts) need heroism and emotion to keep them alive. There may be glory even in defeat but there is none in a hit-and-run policy. Since war must always be the servant of statecraft, even such doubtful strategy as the occupation of Brooklyn Heights had its reason, as our author justly observes. Where the population was sparse, as in the southern states, raiding was in order, was vigorously carried on and produced undeniable although limited results.

The losses to British trade through American privateers are deservedly stressed.

Here and there Washington's achievement might have been shown as even greater than Mr. Frothingham makes it. For instance he too much depreciates the regular tactics of the eighteenth-century professional armies. These tactics he condemns as merely formal, whereas they were admirably adapted to their original purpose, which was fighting small highly trained armies, armed with musket and bayonet, on the cleared and usually unfenced fields of continental Europe. That they were ill adapted to American conditions is obvious enough—as the British commanders themselves, somewhat tardily, realized. But at that they gave the British victory in

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almost every stand-up fight on anything like equal terms until the arrival of Steuben. Having thus depreciated what Steuben had to teach, Mr. Frothingham has some difficulty in explaining the admirable results of his teaching.

Nor does our author adequately estimate the British plan for an invasion from Canada in the critical year 1777. Whether good or bad, Burgoyne's plan was by no means a theoretical map-scheme determined on in ignorance of the country. On the contrary, there were plenty of British officers in London who had campaigned against the French between Albany and the St. Lawrence; indeed Amherst, who had commanded the British army on precisely that ground, was one of the chief military advisers of the British government. And in saying that Burgoyne's route was peculiarly disadvantageous in that it was ". . . cut off from water communication" our author commits the only real howler the reviewer has found in him, for that route was adopted precisely because it had water communications practically all the way. Finally, if Burgoyne's plan was as bad as our author thinks it, how then did it happen that he came so near to achieving success?

The reviewer must further confess some small astonishment at finding no mention of Colonel Oliver L. Spaulding's admirable article, "The Military Studies of George Washington", in the *American Historical Review* for July, 1924. If the author were to express dissatisfaction with this or that policy of the *Historical Review*, he would certainly be challenged to no duel, and for an outline such as Mr. Frothingham's a detailed examination of the vast source material, however desirable, is perhaps not absolutely essential. But to write of Washington as a general without mentioning an article of such calibre seems strange.

Other points might be discussed did space permit. The aid given the British by the American Tories seems underrated; likewise Washington's chances for a substantial success at Monmouth. These, however, are points of detail.

Mr. Frothingham has written an able book which deserves to be read.

HOFFMAN NICKERSON

SCOTT AND HIS CIRCLE *by Donald Carswell* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $3.50)

A CONSIDERATION of Sir Walter Scott and shorter studies of three of his friends—James Hogg, Lockhart and the incomparable Joanna Baillie—make up this volume, which is written in a distinguished, a beautiful prose, rich in literary flavor and leavened by a rare ironic wit.

Never before has there been given us so brilliant a picture of the man behind the image that was Sir Walter Scott. Is it fair? Is it the whole truth? Such questions are not necessary as applied to a study of this kind. Nor can any biography hope to present the whole truth. It is sufficient to say that it is illuminating and that it affords pleasure.

Mr. Carswell uses Scott's lifelong and distracting professional and business entanglements as the thread on which to hang his narrative. And although, so far as I am concerned, not even yet has he cleared up the mystery of why Scott and the Ballantynes and Constable—and everybody else who had business dealings with the greatest money-making writer in the history of letters—were nearly always in financial straits and ended in bankruptcy, still the purpose of the study seems not so much to clear up the involved financial proceedings as to afford, from a new approach, a fresh picture of one of the most extraordinary of men. The single fact emerges that Scott himself was chiefly to blame.

Scott is fortunate in having so charming and balanced an adversary as Mr. Carswell, who deals with him hardly both as to character and genius with deft, rapier-like, surprise thrusts, but who does so fairly and

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intelligently. And at the end he can be generous to fallen greatness. "To discuss," he winds up, "the quality of Scott's genius is no part of the present study, and merely to extol its magnificence would be an idle and impertinent display of brave words. It is enough to say that in the history of prose fiction there are but two epoch makers—Cervantes, who did the ancient and beloved art of pure story-telling to a cruel death, and Walter Scott, who brought it to a glorious resurrection." Which, taken in connection with what has gone before it, is an encomium delightfully subtle.

The sketch of Hogg comes off amusingly. It is apparent that Mr. Carswell loves "the Ettrick Shepherd" and that he half sheathes his satiric claws against so easy a mark. The study, though veiled in humor, is truly sympathetic and Hogg emerges from this little essay, his character improved, his reputation certainly enhanced.

The Baillie sisters, Mr. Carswell informs us, spoke very little in society. But when they did venture to put in a few remarks everybody listened. "This was not because of their wit, for they had none. It was because of their accent." How the authoress of *Plays on the Passions* rose to such heights that "with the solitary exception of Jeffrey, the opinion of the greatest generation of English letters since Elizabeth ranked her as a genius of the first order" must remain one of those singular and disconcerting revelations by which almost every literary period, at one time or another, gives itself away.

FRED T. MARSH

WHISTLER *by John Laver* (COSMOPOLITAN. $5.00)

ANOTHER book about Whistler, and one which should prove grateful to the post-war generation who happened along too late to be brought up on tales of Whistlerian wit and humor to quite the extent that their fathers were. It changes in mood from its first jolly pages, through which Whistler swaggers like the hero of a picaresque novel, to the pathos of its conclusion, where the artist, now a peevish, disappointed old man, is no longer news for the front page, but an established and uncontested "old master".

John Laver, an art critic of considerable reputation, has an ingratiating manner of handling his material. The warm zest with which he writes may be traceable to his shrewd appreciation of the romantic element. If you ever thrilled to *Trilby* you will bless Mr. Laver for identifying Whistler so nicely with the Paris that Du Maurier loved. In what might almost serve as a text-book, Laver attempts to evaluate the Whistler legend, opposing the partisanship of the Pennells on the one extreme to the criticism of Roger Fry and Julius Meier-Graefe on the other. His portrait of Whistler is masterly, a combination of Don Quixote on the field of battle, and Cyrano with his *panache*.

WHISTLER: THE FRIEND *by Elizabeth Robins Pennell* (LIPPINCOTT. $3.00)

MRS. PENNELL has added another charming study to the existing group of Whistleriana, her aim the gentle one of revealing Whistler as he appeared in his intimate circle, playing the rôle of beloved companion and kindly friend. To a public sated with accounts of the artist's caustic and imperial scorn of the commonplace, these recollections will come as a pleasant diversion indeed.

This delightfully illustrated book is based upon the Whistler-Fantin letters, twenty-eight in number, which have recently come into Mrs. Pennell's possession. We are taken on a journey back to Paris in the days when Whistler studied in the Latin Quarter, wearing his amazing broad hat, already marked by an unfailing sense of the "droll in life", the days when his friend, Fantin-Latour—that solemn young man—struggled desperately to keep body and soul together, "obliged to paint flowers when he had more

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ideas in his head than he knew what to do with", a "Michael Angelo stranded in front of roses and poppies". In London we encounter Rossetti, Legros, Ernest Delannoy, and Jo, the "belle Irlandaise". Through it all, Mrs. Pennell emphasizes Whistler's genius for friendship, and his dependence upon those whom he esteemed and loved.

BETTY DRURY

JEFFERSON DAVIS: POLITICAL SOLDIER *by Elizabeth Cutting* (DODD, MEAD. $5.00)

IT IS impossible to make a great man out of Jefferson Davis and Miss Cutting does not try, though her treatment is considerate and fair. That he became conspicuous needs no denial, but this does not necessarily carry with it a true form of eminence. A graduate of West Point, with one hundred and thirty-seven demerits to his credit, plus one court martial, he saw six years of service in the regular army, which gave him a brief bit of Indian campaigning in the Black Hawk War. Resigning to marry the daughter of his Colonel, Zachary Taylor, against that gentleman's wishes, he retired to a plantation in Mississippi. Mrs. Davis soon died of malarial fever which nearly took her husband with her. Ten years later he married Varina Howell, and went to Congress. The Mexican War called him from his seat, and as commander of a Mississippi volunteer regiment he aided in securing the victory at Buena Vista, which brought him a deal of political capital and carried him into the Senate, where as a defender of Southern ideas he made himself continuously prominent until Franklin Pierce selected him for Secretary of War. This duty over, he returned to the Senate and remained there until certain his State had seceded. He had led the fire-eaters on the floor, but went beyond Calhoun's doctrine of nullification and became the foremost advocate of secession. This made him President of the Confederacy, not by popular vote, which never passed upon the question of separation. The move was altogether oligarchical.

Davis did not shine as the head of the Confederacy. Unlike the wise Lincoln, though a politician successful in advancing himself, he could not handle others. The glory of the Confederacy is not his but that of the men who fought so well and died so bravely. Miss Cutting affords several illuminating chapters on relations with England and France, whose recognition of the South at the right moment might, perhaps have forced some sort of a compromise. She thinks that had not Cyrus Field's Atlantic cable failed after the first message passed, it might have brought some word that would have stayed or stopped the conflict, in the interest of Britain's cotton supply. The author errs in saying that General Braxton Bragg was removed after Missionary Ridge. He threw up the command voluntarily, and Davis brought him to Richmond as his Chief-of-Staff, which gave him the rank of Commander-in-Chief of the armies. Never restored to citizenship nor accepted as a hero by his people, Davis faded out gently in long retirement at Beauvoir, on the Gulf, instead of being hanged on a sour apple tree as suggested up North in speech and song. Above Messrs. Mason and Dixon's celebrated line he is still the prototype of an arch-traitor who cannot be rehabilitated into a patriot.

DON C. SEITZ

THE JOURNAL OF MY OTHER SELF *by Rainer Maria Rilke* (NORTON. $3.00)

RAINER MARIA RILKE is little known here; he is said to have been little known in Europe until his death in 1926, when the expressed admiration of Gide, Stephan Zweig, Valéry and others brought him a wider group of readers. In 1923 some of his poems were included in *Contemporary German Poetry*, chosen and translated by Babette Deutsch and Avrahm Yarmolinsky; the poems reveal

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a sensitive artist, disciplined and perceiving; they reveal, too, a Franciscan mystic.

The prose of an authentic poet is sometimes as beautiful, as rich in divination, as his poems. In Rilke's case that is admirably true. His prose is as quiet, as delicately lovely as a golden autumn leaf lying on the water of a dark, unmoving pool. His subject matter is the stuff of poems and philosophy: love, death, folk-ways, inheritance, memories, ghosts. This ancient gold he has reworked and stamped with his own seal into a new and beautiful currency. *The Journal of My Other Self* is, if one takes the usual thing as criterion, not autobiography; it is autobiography raised to its highest power: we do not have revealed to us the superficialities of dates, dinners, chats, and genealogies, cabbages and kings, wars and rumors of wars. Instead, the delightfully rare, important revelations, the ideas, preoccupations and perceptions of an original mind.

In his poem *Quai du Rosaire: Bruges* he speaks of

> . . . waters the clear dusk has dyed,
> wherein, as things grow mellowed and impearled,
> the clearer shines a mirror-imaged world,
> more real than things substantial ever were.

And it is this mirror-imaged world, clearly shining in his mind, that we are permitted to see in the *Journal*. His childhood was spent at Urnekloster, a manor evidently near the Danish border, or perhaps within the Danish boundaries. A childhood in a lovely, populous manor house, a house that sheltered an irascible old Count, his grandfather, Mathilde, a religious mystic, Little Erik, and Christine Brahe, who, long since dead, appeared in spirit upon state occasions, Abelone, a lovely girl who never married "because there was no one there", and galleries of painted ancestors, who were talked of as if they were living and might appear at any moment, and have tea on the terrace.

Rilke lived for many years in Paris, and there is much of Paris in the *Journal*. It is the Paris of little garrets, of artists and medical students, and poor people. There is much of life in his *Journal*, and a great deal about death. His treatment of death is Socratic; calm, unhurried, even playful. He is speaking of the Hôtel Dieu in Paris: "This excellent Hôtel is very ancient. Even in King Clovis' time people died there in a number of beds. Now they are dying there in five hundred and fifty-nine beds. Of course the whole thing is mechanical. With such an enormous output an individual death is not so thoroughly carried out; but that is, after all, of little consequence. It is quantity that counts. Who cares anything today for a well-finished death? No one. Even wealthy people who could afford this luxury are beginning to be careless and indifferent about the matter. The desire to have a death of one's own is growing more and more rare. In a little while it will be as rare as a life of one's own".

To say, as one must, that many of the incidents recorded in the *Journal* are "individual deaths" is to give, perhaps, a false impression, to imply that Rilke had a morbid mind, and that he was, perhaps, an inferior Hamlet. The word inferior should, in any case, be removed. This *Journal of My Other Self* is a mine of interesting treasures: prose poems, ironic paragraphs and sketches, tender, lyric memories, bitter-barbed satire, short stories. The book closes with one of the greatest short stories ever written—an extended, poetic, reversed version of the parable of the Prodigal Son.

COLEY TAYLOR

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ESSAYS AND CRITICISM

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY: PERSONAL STATEMENTS

edited by George P. Adams and Wm. Pepperell Montague (MACMILLAN. TWO VOLS. $6.00 EACH)

THIRTY-FOUR teachers of philosophy here unite to explain themselves in about 350,000 words. Each of them was asked "to state his principal philosophic beliefs", his reasons for them, and "the circumstances in his life history which had influenced him in reaching" them. Though all accepted the invitation, not everyone complied with its terms. A few have recounted certain "circumstances" without getting any further; while others have stated their beliefs without going back to the "circumstances". Nevertheless, the autobiographic intention fairly pervades the collection, and gives it an historic value for which the patient student will prize it. The ribald student will also find in it his reward, as witness this example of naïveté: "I count myself peculiarly fortunate to have come to maturity in a period of reconstruction. What I brought was a very persistent mind with a keen sense for realities". And, "I have the blood of the Crusaders in my veins", announces another contributor, who has the good fortune to be expending it for a Noble Cause ("rich and adventurous happiness") in an institution "now more than ever in the forefront of agencies for women's education". Such instances of unfortunate self-betrayal are, however, it must be added, markedly infrequent in these volumes.

Their inception was prompted by a similar work, *Contemporary British Philosophy*, in two series, the first of which was published in 1924. The British volumes in turn had been suggested by a German work of the same kind, the first volume of which was published in Leipzig in 1920. The German pioneer in this infectious enterprise, Dr. Raymond Schmidt, chose as his motto a sentence by Fichte: "The kind of philosophy that a man chooses depends upon the kind of man that he is". Professor J. H. Muirhead, editor of *Contemporary British Philosophy*, accepted this motto and, indeed, interestingly enlarged upon it. And Professors Adams and Montague perforce recognize its truth, though with a difference: they find it "wholesomely humiliating".

Perhaps humility, then, accounts for their manner of performing their editorial task; though the arrangements for these books were, from beginning to end, characteristically American. Committees were appointed to represent each of the three divisions of the American Philosophical Association, and the chairmen of these committees became the editors in active charge of the project. (Their number was later reduced to two by the death of the chairman of the committee representing the Western Division.) The editors then selected their contributors by sending out ballots and counting the votes. And finally they endeavored to allay any dissatisfied feelings of those not asked to contribute by expressing "regret that either through the more or less accidental omissions in this hastily taken referendum or through sudden illness . . . a number of colleagues whose essays would have been greatly valued are not here represented".

The result of this editorial effort is that every contributor is or has been a professor, and that every contributor is, I believe, or has been a member of the Philosophical As-

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sociation. This is a strictly professional undertaking, and is fairly representative of contemporary American thought only so far as may be consistent with that limitation. It is, I think, a real one. Most—though by no means all—of those generally recognized as eminent in the profession contribute essays; but, beyond these, the volumes are stuffed out with a number of articles which might equally well, one fancies, have come from any professionally trained teacher of philosophy. And, moreover, the work as a whole strikes a note of specialism, almost amounting to provincialism, which may not be fairly representative of philosophic thought in the United States, and which might, consequently, have been avoided had the editors ventured outside of the membership of the Philosophical Association for some of the contributions. There are several distinguished exceptions—notably Professor Warner Fite's finely written statement of that which is central in his informed and mature, though fragmentary, philosophy. And it need only be said that Professor Santayana is a contributor, to prove that there is another exception. Nevertheless, these are exceptions; and in general it must be said that the professional thinkers do not write as cultivated men, men with background and the rewards of a broadly conceived educational discipline or of much reading.

In this, to be sure, they are the victims of the time. But nowhere does our specialism show itself to be more vicious than in philosophy, which is essentially a way of life, not a profession, and not a game. And it is an ironic fact that while we owe specialism in philosophy chiefly to Harvard, we also owe chiefly to Harvard the impulse which may eventually deliver us from a costly blunder. Several of the essayists mention that, in their youth, American instruction in philosophy was entirely in the hands of clergymen—men whose philosophic interests were apparently of the slightest, and whose connection with the long and rich past of Western culture was tenuous and merely formal. Working in isolation, on the outposts of a civilization that, proudly ignorant of the past and looking only to the future, was taking an independent course, they did very little to make philosophy real, or indeed at all relevant, to the life around them. And practically all of the writers now under review acknowledge that the dominant influences when they were growing to manhood were those of their own century, those born of romanticism or of "modern science"—absolute idealism or materialism, imported, like other novelties of the day, from abroad. But in the 1870's a change took place. These influences became naturalized to the extent of obtaining an American center—the department of philosophy at Harvard, which at the same time, both by example and by the training it gave, proceeded to make the teaching of philosophy a specialized secular profession. Within that department, however, was William James, who was to grow deeply dissatisfied with the current absolutisms, feeling that they withdrew both from reality and from life precious attributes—that they really denied life as we know it, for the convenience of fitting it neatly into a finished picture of a coherent universe. This dissatisfaction, and his accompanying conviction that nothing was really settled or established in philosophy, he communicated to his pupils and to the public, aided powerfully by a general restlessness towards the close of the last century into which many factors entered. He made a profound impression. Two survivors from the great days of philosophy at Harvard contribute to these volumes, and to one of them, Professor George Herbert Palmer, the books are very fittingly dedicated. The other, Professor Santayana, has exerted a strong influence which is acknowledged in a number of these essays. But neither of these gentlemen, nor Royce, nor anyone else, ever approached James in his power to fix attention and win adherents. The answers he proposed to his questions were flimsy. They have mostly been

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discarded, and the stir they once raised will soon be a matter for wonder. His important work, as these volumes remarkably testify, lay in his questions, coming when they did, and from him.

What was the result? Many other influences have been potent in bringing it about, and undeniably the first impression caught from *Contemporary American Philosophy* is that of a choppy sea, full of confused cross-currents vainly running into each other and flowing nowhere. I do not wish to belittle the other influences, nor is this first impression really false. But it is incomplete; and the conclusion it suggests when taken by itself—that philosophic thought as now carried on is one of the most futile of human activities—may be very unjust. For underneath the cross-currents which are at present simply nullifying each other, one may, with some patience and study, begin to discern a common cause working slowly and deeply in the interest of order. And it is this: Nearly all of the essayists in these volumes are at bottom concerned with the troublesome, fruitful questions which William James used to ask—with the fundamental *human* questions—and are groping for an answer which will hold, not merely for one aspect of man's nature, to the exclusion of all else that may be a nuisance from that angle as illusion, but for an answer having within it a real place for all enduring truths of human experience. This common motive serves to give a measure of real unity to these volumes, and to their reader a measure of real hope. Perhaps none of the offered answers will do, and in many cases their authors know it. It is not a little pathetic to find Professor Dewey, disappointed after all these years in his expectations, turning now to millennial visions. More serviceable than anything he has succeeded in giving to the world, the value-philosophy elaborated by several of his colleagues is still equally a temporary expedient. So also perhaps is realism in any of its present forms, yet several of the realists seem more certainly to be on the pathway leading to wisdom than do any other of these professional thinkers. And nothing is more encouraging than the fact that these realists and one or two who deserve but do not claim the name have been led into some form of dualism—ethical or epistemological—and have had the courage to accept their conclusion without disguising or attenuating it. Nothing—unless it be the reflection of another, that "it is a matter of surprise how much of what seems original is foreshadowed by the geniuses of the past". This is naïve, but it is heartening to anyone concerned over the fortunes of civilized man.

ROBERT SHAFER

REVOLT IN THE ARTS: A SURVEY OF THE CREATION, DISTRIBUTION AND APPRECIATION OF ART IN AMERICA *by Oliver M. Sayler with contributions by thirty-six representative authorities in the several arts* (BRENTANO. $3.50)

MR. SAYLER tells us that he originally planned a symposium, but he grew so interested in his own ideas that he offers us the following: one hundred and seventy pages by Mr. Sayler, and one hundred and sixty-one pages divided among the thirty-six whom he rightly calls "distinguished contributors", who are allowed from seven hundred to fifteen hundred words each. With considerable trumpeting Mr. Sayler tells us that this is a Machine Age and in the arts an Age of "Revolt", representing "such a speeding up of evolutionary processes as to justify the employment of the term 'revolutionary' ". It would seem from a consideration of the evidence which he offers that what he means by "revolt" is not, as Webster puts it, "to renounce allegiance; rebel; desert one party for another", but simply to change; like Jurgen, to try anything once if it looks attractive. In the arts, except those of the vocal cinema and the radio, which have no traditions to revolt from, the movements which Mr. Sayler cites as revolutionary have not only been going on for a far longer time

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than he indicates, but for many years now have had to encounter no effective opposition except indifference. Mr. Sayler would seem to carry over from his sojourn in Russia the notion that the really creative artist must, like the good bolshevik, spend his time fighting those who disagree with him. As a matter of fact, generally speaking, in the arts it is the conservatives who are now in the minority and on the defensive, the "progressives" like Mr. Sayler who are arrogantly on the lookout for opposition to snipe at.

A sample of his sharpshooting is his disposal of the new humanists, whom he calls "Professors Babbitt and More and their callow and spineless protégés". They are, he says, "fighting a futile and hopeless battle". "Forgetting that philosophy is the crystallization by a seer of the subconscious ideals, impulses and longings of his time, and that it cannot be imposed arbitrarily from above or from the outside, Professors Babbitt and More and their doctrinaire camp-followers have attempted fatuously to enlist support for their philosophic program of restraint and decorum." And he thinks "their impertinence" should be left not to the "scholarly refutations" of C. Hartley Grattan and his cohorts, but to Will Rogers. He himself seems satisfied that the above remarks are an adequate disposal of humanism. The humanist, spineless creature that he is, if he is able to recover from such an attack may mildly inquire by what divine revelation Mr. Sayler knows that philosophy is the crystallization of the subconscious ideals, et cetera, of the age. The humanist might respectfully suggest that Mr. Sayler, in stating this assumption of the naturalists as established fact is begging the entire question at issue. But for such callow and spineless objections of a group who, whatever their limitations, at least attempt to be scholarly, accurate, and logical, Mr. Sayler has no time; he is already up and away with loud hurrahs for the nuptials of Science and Art, shortly to be solemnized by the god of the Machine Age.

Giddiness from the sheer sensation of motion, and consecration to a now hoary convention of romantic rebellion, prevent Mr. Sayler from seeing that he and the humanists are really at one in desiring the improvement of all the arts. He could not be expected to see that whereas he identifies "revolt" with improvement, and improvement with a mere drifting in the tide of change—"the subconscious ideals", et cetera—the humanist believes that today the really courageous and only genuine revolt must come from those who will swim against our modern current of restless experimentalism, in the direction of permanent and tested values.

Mr. Sayler and many of his contributors point out interesting developments and possibilities, particularly in the arts of presentation and music as affected by the talking pictures and the radio. Mr. Sayler is hopeful that the machine, which has the money, will subsidize the hand-working artist, who has the inspiration to give the machine its patterns, and thus enable the dramatist, the actor, the painter, the musician to flourish. In general Mr. Sayler's attempt to view the arts comprehensively is praiseworthy; and if many of his contributors, hampered by their lack of space and by the vague nature of their subject, can only engage in prayerful exhortations to the god of the Machine Age that their own crafts may prosper, we cannot blame them for not being more specific in their recommendations to the deity.

Some of them, however, talk admirable sense. Thus Eva Le Gallienne urges the traditional repertory theatre of Shakespeare and Molière, and free schools for the stage, which "would be beneficial in keeping the true Theatre alive, and in carrying on through America the tradition of the art of the drama, as we have inherited it, among other things, from our mother countries in Europe". Boardman Robinson objects to "the modern craze for freedom of expression", which "tends to emphasize the idiosyncratic and the eccentric, while the material significance of form

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and the capacity for communicating that significance are neglected". And, he thinks, "a new movement of any significance involves a return to first principles". Finally John Sloan has this to say about the dogma of the Machine Age itself: "For my part, and in the present instance, I am strongly inclined to deny the so prevalent statement that this is the 'Machine Age' or that this is any more such than any of the ages before it. . . . The great number of mechanical devices of this day have no esthetic significance whatsoever".

FOUR CONTEMPORARY NOVELISTS
by Wilbur L. Cross (MACMILLAN. $2.00)

THE editor of the *Yale Review* and author of a standard text-book for college students, *The Development of the English Novel*, now brings his historical study partially to date with essays on Conrad, Bennett, Galsworthy and Wells. These in shorter form have appeared from time to time in the *Yale Review*. Together with a brief introduction and a reading list they make up two hundred and four pages of large print.

This is the typical work of a literary historian, combining its virtues and its limitations. On the credit side we must put a simple, readable style; clear analyses of long and often difficult novels; a comprehensive view gained from a lifetime of specialization in the field; reasonable and unbiased judgments, which if they are not very bold are very venerable. Dean Cross (to use three good English words) knows his stuff; he can marshal an imposing array of instances to prove any point, and seems to have all the details of all the novels of all four writers (including Bennett and Wells!) at his fingertips. And at times he shows, breaking through the professorial reserve, an unwithered enthusiasm for good writing.

He follows the typical formula of the literary historian. First he gives us a sketch of the subject's life, then follows either the analytical method, with sections on style, plot, characterization, philosophy, et cetera, or the chronological, analyzing the important works *seriatim*. Criticism as a result gets squeezed in between synopses and biographical data. The manner is the clear and pleasant exposition of the practised lecturer. The synopses, it may be said, are dull to those who have read the books, and dangerous for some who have not, as giving them a false sense of knowing what cannot be known second-hand. But the synopses should be useful to such people as need to have pointed out to them what in the main a novel is about.

But as criticism the method is ineffective, both by reason of the dilution already mentioned, and by reason of lacking a point of view. Impartiality is admirable in a scientist, but admirations and convictions are the life of criticism; we want to know where a man stands even if we disagree with him. The essay on Conrad is illustrative. Dean Cross gives a clear and reasonable account of the romancer's life; clearly and reasonably suggests its effect on his work; accounts with admirable clarity for his style and his peculiar method of plotting; and suggests eminently reasonable views on his philosophy. And when we finish, Conrad is reduced to a well-cultivated field like the cornlands of Iowa. The earnest, note-taking student will scarcely be reminded by Dean Cross of Conrad's nostalgic sadness, the brooding mystery of enveloping nature, the love for Beauty that must die, the pity mingled with admiration for a feeble but heroic mankind, the loyalty to human ideals in face of ultimate defeat. Dean Cross slights three aspects of Conrad's work which are his peculiar distinction: his style, his descriptive power, his heroism. For some understanding of the first we must still go to Ford Madox Ford, who writes as a fellow-artist. From the critic's brief remarks about Conrad's descriptions of nature we get the impression that they are important—like an effective stage set; when we read Conrad we feel that Nature is the very garment of the enveloping mystery of the universe. Fi-

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nally the historian stresses Conrad's pessimism in spite of the fact that the total effect of even his most uncompromising tragedies is vindication of the beauty and value as well as the mystery and pain of life, and the fact that Conrad's treatment of character was heroic after the great tradition. One is content that the earnest student should get his opinions of Bennett, perhaps, and Wells from so able an expositor as our historian, since there is no poetry in them to lose; but Conrad—!

ALAN REYNOLDS THOMPSON

THE RESURRECTION OF ROME *by G. K. Chesterton* (DODD, MEAD. $3.00)

WHAT a man to treat what a subject! Rome —as labyrinthine as the mind and as paradoxical as the style of Chesterton—at last offers a suitable subject for his eloquent pen. Carried away by recent contact with his highly contagious though essentially inimitable language, one might say that when baroque meets baroque a beautiful explosion would be inevitable; one might say this were it not that behind Mr. Chesterton's baroque façade there stands the simplest and solidest of Romanesque interiors. But if, as his deserved popularity shows, it is relatively easy to penetrate his engaging exterior, it is extremely difficult to discern the early-Christian foundations of modern Rome.

And this is precisely what he has done for us. Beginning with the emperor who denounced the idols and ending with the dictator who enthroned the Pope, he outlines a history of Christian Rome to serve as a guide-book for the usage of those Protestants (and Catholics, alas!) who fail to grasp the spirit of the papal city. Fearlessly approaching such delicate subjects as the tombs in Saint Peter's, the temporal power, and the achievements of Fascism, he tells the story of the moral and intellectual triumphs of Christian Rome, which are at once more interesting and of greater value to humanity than the physical triumphs of pagan Rome. He never loses sight of the actual monuments of the city, but constantly uses them to explain the events they commemorate or recall. Thus instead of the dead city familiar to most travellers, he sees that all of Rome is alive even when half of it is asleep and that each part of its past has the power to wake up an infinite number of times. "And just about the time of which I write here," he adds, "several parts of it did." Chesterton's style is here more brilliant than ever. Besides a wealth of *jeux de mots*, he often shows his great facility in that art which has always been as dear to the Celtic as to the Gallic spirit, the art of making epigrams; and there is one here that is priceless: "It is the root of all religion that a man knows that he is nothing in order to thank God that he is something". Indeed, if our twentieth-century *joculator domini* is half as diverting to God as to his fellow mortals, paradise will not be denied him.

FIVE MASTERS *by Joseph Wood Krutch* (CAPE & SMITH. $3.50)

IN this study in the mutations of the novel, the author of *The Modern Temper* makes a strong beginning with his excellent choice of five significant masters: Boccaccio, Cervantes, Richardson, Stendhal and Proust. Each of them, of whom at least three have often come up for discussion of late, represents a turning point in the history of the *genre*. Following Mr. Krutch's attractive if debatable theory of the novel as a form "merely *tending* to detach itself from autobiography and document and merely *tending* towards pure art", Mr. Krutch proceeds to study each artist's personality as the key to an understanding of the revolution he brought about. In contrast to Taine's famous formula which explained everything by reference to racial characteristics and the influence of environment, this method emphasizes rather the novelist's personal experience and individual peculiarities.

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Everything in Boccaccio's life, from his humble and illegitimate birth to his far from platonic love for Fiammetta, prepares him to stand as the epitome of the Renaissance spirit and to live as the creator of the first Human Comedy of modern times. Unlike the two other great *trecento* figures, he needed no point of reference outside contemporary life: neither Dante's eternal principles nor Petrarch's classical criteria. But though this literature based upon the sensual perception of the world about us prevailed for almost three centuries, it had by Cervantes's time become inadequate; and it remained for a swashbuckling soldier and unsuccessful dramatist to introduce the ideal as a foil to the real. Thus *Don Quixote* "is the expression of a faith in the power of the human being to create values by virtue of his faith in them and to generate a world above the world of nature in which his human as opposed to his natural life may be led". It is to Cervantes's two-angled vision, then, that we owe our first stereoscopic picture of life and what Mr. Krutch calls the essence of the art of the modern novel, "three-dimensional fiction".

Again, in the eighteenth century, Samuel Richardson turns the course of the novel by substituting goodness for greatness as the necessary qualification of the hero and by giving a lasting form to the expression of middle-class morality. But after sentimentality had been worn out by Rousseau, Goethe and the later romantic novelists, the great Stendahl appears to turn the hitherto flabby cult of the ego into an exhaustive psychological introspection, pointing the way directly to the most significant of twentieth-century novelists, Marcel Proust, in whose work we find no "synthesis of modern life" but rather the creation of a new world as revolutionary and as real as that to be seen in the *Decameron*.

Mr. Krutch's mingling of biography and criticism, psychology and esthetics needs no apology. With the exception of an overdose of unnecessary quotations in the section devoted to Richardson, the individual studies are remarkably complete and impartial, and from them emerges an admirable outline history of the novel's development.

JUSTIN O'BRIEN

WILLA CATHER *by René Rapin* (MCBRIDE. $1.50)

MR. RAPIN's study of Miss Cather should be classed as an appreciation, rather than a biography or a final critical estimate of her work. However, he gives us an outline of her career, and he points out what he considers her limitations. They may be summed up as the failure to integrate her vision of the pioneer West with her vision of the West preyed on by industrialism, or of the big cities of the industrial East. This failure is evident in *The Song of the Lark*. Thea is real enough in Moonstone, Colorado, or taking a contemplative vacation among the cliff-dwellings, but Miss Cather never makes clear the relation of that Thea to the successful opera singer whom we last glimpse in New York. Professor St. Peter, in *The Professor's House*, Mr. Rapin believes, comes nearer being a synthesis of these two stubborn parts of Miss Cather's material. This book is a study in late middle-age, the autumn of life.

Mr. Rapin carefully refrains from concluding whether Miss Cather's occasional failures are due to her personal failure to organize her experience, or to her failure as an artist to organize her material. But he does make an important distinction, one which has not been sufficiently emphasized in recent criticism, between the romantic Miss Cather and her essentially classic art. The best parts of his little book are devoted to praising this art, especially in *A Lost Lady*, *One of Ours*, *The Professor's House*, and *Death Comes for the Archbishop*. These books are full of restrained emotion, each has its proper unity of tone and feeling, each is a limited but authentic masterpiece. We may grant him so much, and be grateful to

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him for pointing it out, and still writhe when, in his last paragraph, he seems to assign to Miss Cather the Shakespearean virtues of "Valor, candor, tolerance, truthfulness": "Such is the mirror of Shakespeare's mind and work. Such also Willa Cather's in her best books", he says.

FRANCIS FERGUSSON

THE PURITAN MIND *by Herbert Wallace Schneider* (HOLT. $3.00)

THIS book is not so much a direct inquiry into the psychology of the Puritan mind as it is a brief history of American philosophy before Emerson, a history drawn from the theological debates which reflected all important philosophic trends in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Professor Schneider has filled the need for a well-documented and critical study of the undermining of Calvinistic determinism by eighteenth-century beliefs in divine benevolence, natural rights, and democratic humanitarianism. Most significant, however, is his reappraisal of Puritan philosophy, and his demonstration of the thesis that its principles rest on the abiding truth of human existence.

Professor Schneider bases his definition of Puritanism on the sense of sin and human dependence upon the direct action of God. In his thorough interpretation of Edwards's philosophy he finds "this surviving foundation of Calvinistic ideas" transferred from the social and political philosophy of the founders of New England to the inner life of the soul. It is "Puritanism purged of its local and mythological aspects and become an example of that catholic idealism which portrays in poetic language the nature of moral ideas, and which in all ages has found expression in one form or another". Making his most direct evaluation of the Puritan mind in his final chapter, Professor Schneider traces the continuity of these philosophic principles underlying the thought of two "ungodly Puritans": "As Franklin translated into secular terms the moral discipline of New England, so Hawthorne translated into empirical truths the essential doctrines of Calvinism". For, he concludes, the Puritan virtues "are as universal in morals as the Greek ideals in art", while the philosophical basis of Puritanism in a moral seriousness which realistically faces sin as an absolute fact and submits in a sense of piety and tragedy to the inscrutable ways of a higher power, will always represent "the maturity of the human mind".

Professor Schneider has not made a comprehensive study of the Puritan mind. Economic and social motives are too much neglected, especially in his sketchy treatment of Puritanism before 1700. Emphasis on the decline of Calvinism has led him to devote a whole chapter to the Anglican convert, Samuel Johnson of King's College, while dismissing the Mathers with passing comment. One can only regret that with thirty pages of bibliography the author saw fit to simplify so complicated a subject to the limits of a two-hundred-and-fifty-page volume. But in his investigation of the philosophy behind Puritanism, Professor Schneider has made a valuable contribution toward a reinterpretation of its heritage to American culture.

JOHN K. SNYDER

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A VARIED SHELF

THE CONQUEST OF HAPPINESS *by Bertrand Russell* (LIVERIGHT. $3.00)

THIS book is one of the least formal and yet happily one of the best that has come from the prolific pen of Bertrand Russell. Despite the lack of organization and of sufficient generalization to give good working hypotheses, *The Conquest of Happiness* has in it the sort of advice which a confused and blundering world needs.

Positively, the book stresses reason, control, acceptance of reality both mechanical and psychological, and the transcendent virtue of the golden mean. Mr. Russell, as everybody knows, is essentially a rationalist. He extends his theories of individual and social stability from the basis of a hard and brilliant mathematical position. But he does not neglect emotion. To him emotion must always be controlled by reason, and here he is at one with the best of Greek thought. But Mr. Russell, even in this book which contains so much that is excellent, continues to ignore certain fundamental distinctions. They may appear over-subtle and out of reach of the average man, but they are vital to any true understanding of happiness.

For instance, Mr. Russell does not make it clear that there is a difference between the combative will and the will to refrain. He falls too frequently into the Platonic paradox of believing that reason is a sufficient brake to natural and emotion excess. Hence, his emphasis on what he calls "resignation", which is a stoical, not a humanistic, virtue. This resignation might be considered the sign of inner action, but Mr. Russell never presents it as such. Now this point of view involves a fundamental confusion. Stoical resignation is a state of mind induced by reason. Inner action is a condition imposed by the will guided by reason. Of inner action as the way toward happiness, Mr. Russell has little to say. He even stresses outer action and says that "zest is the secret of happiness and well-being". Does he mean zest in the sense in which Hazlitt used "gusto", or does he mean the zest which results from an Aristotelian or Confucian balance?

These distinctions are important to the reader who approaches Mr. Russell's book with a knowledge of the great eudaimonistic philosophies of the past. With these in mind, a reader will find Mr. Russell at center a stoic, and that cold contemplation of the world's panorama from the lofty citadel of reason has proved inadequate.

From a less searching point of view, *The Conquest of Happiness* does contain a fine antidote for contemporary aimlessness in the spiritual realm; for even stoicism is to be preferred to the emotional chaos in which so much of the modern world is floundering.

ALAN BURTON CLARKE

THE PARIS COMMUNE: AN EPISODE IN THE HISTORY OF THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT *by Edward S. Mason* (MACMILLAN. $5.00)

PATRONS of the Russian films will recall *The New Babylon,* a movie which represented the Paris Commune of 1871 as an heroic epoch in the advance of the world towards communism. It is in examination of this view of the Commune that Professor Mason has published his long narrative, more diligent in its documentation than distinguished in its manner.

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A preliminary chapter on Proudhon and Blanqui, whose views were the principal influence upon socialistic thinking in the decade before the Franco-Prussian War, is followed by an account of Napoleon's defeat, the dismal failure of Thiers's government, the revolution of March 18, the organization and procedures of the Commune, and its eventual and violent decline. In the last two chapters Professor Mason analyzes the socialist and communist interpretation of these events (which he calls the "mythology" of the Commune). Their view of the episode is somewhat metaphysical; his is realistic. To them it was a vindication of the Marxian theory of history, a thing inevitable in the struggle of the proletariat against their oppressors, a sign of that destiny which impels the world towards communism. But to Professor Mason the Commune was "a confused and unorganized movement, shot through with patriotic and petit-bourgeois elements, the product of many and conflicting causes". It was, he asserts, not internationalist, as it must necessarily have been to fit in with the Marxian scheme of history, but patriotic to the point of chauvinism. Its leaders, when they were not simply opportunistic, followed the anarchism of Proudhon or the Jacobinism of Blanqui, and not the communism of Karl Marx. And in the end the Commune failed through the lack of a definite revolutionary program.

Yet, though Professor Mason does not regard the Commune as a manifestation of pure communism, he considers the event as of more importance in the history of socialism than is usually accorded to it. His book is an effort to rescue the Commune from the indifference of the average historian as well as from the interested preoccupation of the communist.

One can see, almost at the outset of the volume, that in terms of historical accuracy Professor Mason is right. Yet his struggle with the obstinate historians of the U.S.S.R. seems rather vain because it is so evidently a struggle of first principles. At any rate the author makes a rather significant confession in the last paragraph of his book. "The legend," he says, "is more vital than the fact."

FREDERICK DUPEE

THE HUMAN FACE *by Max Picard*
(FARRAR & RINEHART. $4.00)

THIS book is at once beautiful and wise; so beautiful and so wise that it may appear disorderly and foolish. Max Picard is a German philosopher and physician, and the background of his book is certainly philosophical. But if I had to paraphrase its whole content in one sentence I should say: it is the *contemplation* of the image of God in the human face. This, since it arises from a natural love of God, from a natural desire to be alone with God, is mysticism, but it is the mysticism of a poet since it is content to stop half way, to stop *at* the human face; for it is true of mystical poetry in general that its need for expression is always a little ahead of its need for contemplation, and that its own images stand between itself and the god it would be alone with. Picard, then, as poet, quite naturally passes from the contemplation of the image of God in the human face to the contemplation of the human face itself; of its shape; its presence; its relationship to the universe; the difference between human and animal faces, age and youth, male and female; the rise of stars, the growth of trees and flowers, the weight of soil *in* the face; and many things more which are definitely shaped by the imagery and informed with the imagination of poetry, of poetry as moving away from philosophy, and as contrasted with prose.

If this has been described as a philosophical work it is because its background is one of medieval philosophy, idealistic and dualistic; because the form of its prose, which advances by repetition, two steps forward and one backward, and its clearly dialectical

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character are medieval; and because in certain passages which deal with faces, and specifically with the causes of disorder in modern faces, there is a clear strain of philosophical inquiry. A philosophical background means no more than this: the book is not a fluke, there is learning behind it. And if one inquires how it is possible for a prose work to be *formally* philosophical, and yet to have a content that is closely related to poetry, it is because, in the first place, philosophy has been used as a jumping-off place, not as a method of procedure; and because, in the second place, dialectic has been used as the control of a poetic imagination trying to express itself, to analyze itself, to argue with itself, prosaically.

It is impossible to give a respectable summary of the contents of this book. It has the intuitive wisdom and the verbal beauty of poetry; it is by no means perfect, since the dissimilarity of form and method on the one hand and content on the other sometimes results in a childish image, or a foolish and disorderly contradiction. It will not please everyone, yet one needs no special taste to be pleased with it. Above all, it has the power to be alone with its subject. In another sense, as a piece of literature in this century and this generation, it is quite alone. And this double loneliness is one of the strangest and most compelling experiences I have ever had.

GEORGE DANGERFIELD

MADAME DE STAËL AND THE UNITED STATES *by Richmond Laurin Hawkins* (HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS. $2.00)

PROFESSOR HAWKINS has an enviable gift for unearthing and presenting in their full significance hitherto unpublished letters of the greatest French writers. His present volume does not limit its appeal to scholars. Utilizing manuscript letters scattered throughout America in university and public libraries, historical societies and private collections, he throws an entirely new light on the woman Napoleon feared; for here we see the great precursor of the romantic movement in her relations with our own ancestors: Benjamin Franklin, Gouverneur Morris, Le Ray de Chaumont, Judge William Cooper (father of Fenimore Cooper), Thomas Jefferson, Albert Gallatin, and the Adamses. We learn that not only did she invest thousands of dollars in Pennsylvania and Northern New York property but that for ten years she entertained the idea of emigrating to our shores and even of naturalizing her eldest son among the people she considered as "the advance-guard of the human race, the future of the world". Unfortunately for us, and fortunately for French literature, she never realized her desires, because she knew that for a *mondaine* existence was possible only within easy reach of the capital from which she was so cruelly exiled.

It is perhaps no less significant that those two great columns standing one on either side of the portal of French Romanticism, Madame de Staël and Chateaubriand, should have felt so irresistibly drawn to America than that twentieth-century Parisian intellectuals should be repelled by our civilization. At any rate Professor Hawkins's original little study serves as a welcome antidote to the attacks which MM. Morand and Duhamel have recently directed against us.

JUSTIN O'BRIEN

THREE TITANS *by Emil Ludwig* (PUTNAM. $3.50)

"BUT genius," Emil Ludwig writes here, "forever imprisoned in the oystershell of imagination, hears only the murmur of the ocean, sees the light only through that opaline medium, and confidently dreams the dream of the pearl." Whether or no this be the way of genius, it is certainly Herr Ludwig's way. He broods intensely, conceives passionately and confidently brings forth. He is not one of your niggling historians who look before they leap, but, clasping his chosen theory to

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his breast, he soars into the empyrean and sweeps away any facts which might hinder his flight. Nothing is so bourgeois as a fact.

Three Titans is a study of Michael Angelo, Rembrandt and Beethoven, whose mystical affinity is expounded in the preface; and let it be said at once that those to whom these and their art are familiar will find them distorted in the opaline medium of Herr Ludwig. The book is addressed to the general reader, who knows that Michael Angelo is not the ice-man, who has heard the adjective rembrandtesque and who recognizes the name Beethoven from concert advertisements. It has the holding power of expert fiction, and Michael Angelo, the remotest in time, is most alive. He stands and moves before us, child of the neo-classicism of the Renaissance, artist, artisan and architect, waging lifelong warfare against Popes, cardinals and princes on the one hand, and stone-masons, carts and timber, roads, rivers and cranes on the other; working incessantly, and living at last in a little house in Rome with one servant, and an occasional corpse for model. There is color also, in the Rembrandt story (which is treated exactly like fiction) and one gorgeous touch of the old master painting his portrait in a cracked mirror while his house was being sold over his head. The life of Beethoven is flatter and less congenial to the author's style.

It is a pity that more space was not given to depicting the times in which these three lived rather than to tiresome *leitmotifs* like "the curse of Saskia's gold", and "the shadow of the pope's tomb". It is significant that Michael Angelo's contemporaries held him in honor, that to Rembrandt's countrymen he was "only a painter" and that Beethoven had the support of an artistic clique. It is the human interest of their story which is stressed, and the tragic irony of their fate, which exacts that, though they create like gods, they are not exempt from the most squalid circumstances of human bondage.

OLGA KATZIN

HORACE WALPOLE'S ENGLAND *edited by Alfred Bishop Mason* (HOUGHTON MIFFLIN. $5.00)

HORACE WALPOLE, youngest son of the prime minister of the first two Georges, was born in 1717 in a house on a fashionable London street, and died, eighty years later, in a house on another fashionable street, near by. He began writing letters as a schoolboy and continued until within two months of his death. He and William Cowper are regarded as the finest letter writers of the eighteenth century in England, but Walpole enjoyed social opportunities beyond the grasp of the recluse poet. What he did with those opportunities made him the most brilliant informal reporter of six decades. Despite Lord Macaulay, he had a soul superior to that of a gentleman usher at court, for he had an intelligence and a spirit that rose above the sources of a pension that comfortably cushioned him throughout life.

And now comes Alfred Bishop Mason to show us what delightful reading these letters make. Out of the nine fat volumes of the standard edition of the *Letters*, Mr. Mason has extracted enough for a fat volume of almost four hundred pages.

The *Letters* compose a cyclorama of the century in England—the inauguration of Italian opera, the prevalence of highway robbery, the gambling away of estates at White's and Almack's, the press of fashion at Ranelagh, important murders and executions, the rise of Wilkes, riotings, the trials and executions of the rebel lords and the Gordon riots, the marriages and elopements of famous beauties, the wars England fought, the first balloon ascensions, the rise of Pitt and Fox, the freshest *bons mots*, the vanity of Gibbon, the effrontery of Boswell and the vulgarity of *She Stoops to Conquer*. They have the unconscious charm that belongs to a naïve report of history in the making. Half spectator, half participant, Walpole never fell into the error of ignoring the im-

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portant or losing his head over the trivial. The past becomes contemporaneous.

Mr. Mason has done his job well, clarifying with his own notes a little too infrequently, perhaps, for the convenience of those without much previous knowledge of the England of the first three Georges. The illustrations, however, are numerous, well-chosen and well reproduced.

HARRY SALPETER

REALISM IN ROMANTIC JAPAN *by Miriam Beard* (MACMILLAN. $5.00)

AN intelligent and serious work, this book clears up a great many questions for those interested in the awakening Orient. For one thing, it corrects our accepting as proved beyond doubt that the East and the West are forever sundered. Lucidly Miss Beard shows that the two are inextricably interwoven, that the West owes as much to the East as the East now seems to be borrowing from the West. The problems of economic survival, of industry, of imperialism, of feminism, of democracy, are as pressing in Japan as they are in any Occidental country. What romanticism is left is a retention of that fresh and wondering and mystical attitude toward things which characterized the western peoples when they themselves were young and trusting, in an historical sense.

Miriam Beard writes with fine poetic sympathy strengthened by scholarly objectivity. She never dissociates her observations from their background, but most skilfully blends them with justified deductions. She discusses Japanese cities and countryside, surging populations and social subdivisions. She tells of the new woman and the modern man; of the passing "geisha" and the ascending "moga" or flapper type of college life, the arts, the religious ferment. In short, she recreates the flux and flavor of life in a country willing to be the testing-ground for everything of which the West is proud.

LOUIS RICH

LETTERS FROM ARMAGEDDON *edited by Amy Gordon Grant* (HOUGHTON MIFFLIN. $3.50)

THESE letters, here published for the first time, have been collected by Mrs. Grant mainly from friends and relatives in Canada whose sons volunteered in 1914. The letters have been read in public, and the proceeds of the readings devoted to war charities. They form a vivid collection. Not all of the letters were written by combatants. There are some from nurses, from war mothers on both sides, and from prominent persons engaged in the conduct of the war. Some from the Front are excellent—one of the best recounts in detail the adventures of a Canadian officer escaping from a German prison camp. Others, which contain detailed descriptions of naval and submarine warfare, are among the most interesting documents of the sort we have. In general, however, the collection savors too strongly of war propaganda.

HOMES OF THE CAVALIERS *by Katherine Scarborough* (MACMILLAN. $5.00)

ON THE shores of Chesapeake Bay and on the banks of the Potomac, the English colonists transplanted the only version of European feudalism which ever flourished in America. The manorial system, already dying out of England, throve in the hospitable soil of pre-Revolutionary Maryland. The great landholders were permitted by act of Assembly to exercise the rights of Court Baron and Court Leet, which gave them virtually the power of life and death over their tenants. The tenants, in turn, were required to take an oath of fealty to the lord of the manor. In a new and fertile country, the life of the great landowner was one of ease and luxury. The aristocrats of Maryland clothed themselves in velvet and gold lace, and the building of great houses became something of a passion. There remain today, on the reduced acres of the estates granted

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by Lord Baltimore, stately manor houses built by the cavaliers, dwellings whose very names—Sotterley, Chanceford, Killmain, Habre de Venture—still convey to the reader some of the glamour of those spacious days, and suggest the very nature of the life of this rich company of colonists.

Katherine Scarborough has examined, described, and set forth the history of a number of these typical manorial dwellings. From an architectural point of view her work is interesting, minutely descriptive and excellently illustrated. But even more interesting are the histories of some of the houses. The story of the Carrolls, centered about the magnificence of Doughoregan Manor, and the story of the Hammonds at Burleigh, are among the most colorful in our colonial history. Miss Scarborough has done a careful and informative piece of work in a field which has been, from the point of view of the general reader, decidedly neglected.

MARGARET WALLACE

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES IN INDIA AND EUROPE 1830–1888 OF AUGUSTA BECHER *edited by H. G. Rawlinson* (R. R. SMITH. $3.00)

THE author of this memoir, written not with any view toward publication but solely for the eyes of her children, seems to have been a gallant, plucky, and capable little Victorian, an admirable wife for a conscientious and ambitious English officer in India. The volume is hardly adapted for general circulation, though for the curious reader it contains stores of raw material and the very stuff of human drama—but one must read as much between the lines as in them. Mrs. Becher's marriage began as a romance and it is her pride that it remained a romance many years longer than most marriages. The time came, however, she tells us with great delicacy, when romance was over and she must set about building up the edifice of a true comradeship. In the meantime she had had ten children, five of whom died; had passed through many hardships and dangers, including the mutiny of '57; and had lost her health.

There is pathos in this naïve story by a courageous and profoundly ignorant wife of a retired general telling of the experiences of her youth in far-away India. She is kindly disposed in her memory of her Indian servants—the nice ones—but is for the most part quite oblivious of the India of the Indians. Beyond her personal life, which was rich and full, certainly, she seems to have had little idea of what was going on or what problems were involved.

FRED T. MARSH

WHEN SHIPS WERE SHIPS *by William Morris Barnes* (BONI. $3.00)

FOR sixty-five years Captain Bill Barnes has sailed the seven seas in quest of adventure, and this book of reminiscences is the saga of an extraordinary career. His story, recorded with the aid of a dictaphone and sympathetically edited by Hilda Renbold Wortman, is an unpretentious, exciting and dramatic journal of life at sea. Captain Barnes, now over eighty years old and on *terra firma* at Sailors' Snug Harbor, was a sailor when "ships were ships and not tin pots". His was the romantic era of the sailing vessel when shanghaiing, drunken sprees, forecastle superstitions, and long lonely voyages were the order of the day and a mutely eloquent "Lost at sea" was often the seaman's sole reward. He shipped on over fifty vessels as master, officer and apprentice, always loyal to his own religion of "a clear conscience, a sharp knife and ready to cut at a moment's notice". His printed recollections are garrulous and sincere; a stirring story of those forgotten days when America was primarily a maritime nation.

WILLIAM J. FADIMAN

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NEW EMPIRES *by Karl A. Bickel* (LIPPINCOTT. $1.50)

MR. BICKEL, as head of the news-collecting and purveying United Press, itself a commercial organization, endeavors to appraise a rising competition, the distribution of news and the circulation of advertising announcements, by radio. His new "empires" are therefore those of the air, whose rulers are the broadcasting corporations, limited in number and quasi-monopolistic, riding on the Hertzian waves. He finds that many of the American newspapers have thrown an anchor to windward by establishing broadcasting services of their own, but is free to admit that the "new" rulers are bound to prove menacing.

In approaching the subject he considers the status of the various kinds of journalism and is inclined to believe their efforts are archaic. Probably this is true when measured by his surprising standards. He will have it, for example, that the money-makers—not the statesmen, the thinkers and the patriots—are to have sole place in shaping the welfare of our uncommon country. He overlooks the power of a few drops of ink properly spread. These have destroyed empires before today and are equal to disposing of those Mr. Bickel has discovered. For one thing the vapid conveyance of information through a loud speaker can never satisfy the minds of those who can rule whenever they see fit—and these are not they whom he names!

DON C. SEITZ

THE MYSTIC WILL *by Howard H. Brinton* (MACMILLAN. $2.50)

BUTLER writes of Hudibras's learned and pious squire:

> He *Anthroposophus* and *Floud*
> And *Jacob Behmen* understood.

No very considerable company have shared this privilege; yet at no period has Boehme (1575-1624) entirely wanted for admirers and expositors. In England, the seventeenth century furnished John Sparrow and John Ellistone, translators of all Boehme's works, the "Philadelphians", Dr. Pordage and Mrs. Jane Lead; the later books of Augustan William Law, especially his *Way to Divine Knowledge* (1752), lucidly interpret the mind of the Silesian mystic, though, in Dr. Brinton's opinion, "they show that their author did not completely grasp the profundity of his master's philosophy"; in the last century, Christopher Walton and Mrs. Anne Penny devoted themselves to Boehme. The Transcendentalists on both sides of the Atlantic enrolled him in their calendar of Saints: In Germany, the idealists of the great age read, praised, borrowed.

Dr. Brinton's monograph, which bears the elucidating subtitle "Based on a Study of the Philosophy of Jacob Boehme", surveys the literature of the subject with some dissatisfaction. Few previous studies, we are warned, have been *impartial*. Bishop Martensen, who, like Law, knows how to invest his writing with ease and charm, is accused of having attempted to turn Boehme into an orthodox Lutheran. Brinton aims at emphasis upon "those aspects of Boehme's philosophy which throw light on modern problems"; in consequence of which we are invited to view Boehme as "preëminently a philosopher of evolution". But Boehme also charted the return course (God to Nature; *emanation*): Brinton honestly admits to that, and treats us to chapters on both emanation and evolution.

A disappointing book, this. An impartial study of Boehme is greatly needed, but it must be imaginative as well. Boehme, like Swedenborg, requires more than parroting. Mrs. Penny's essays on Boehme, like many nineteenth-century books on Swedenborg, consist principally of compilation and quotation. Emerson's lecture on Swedenborg distressed orthodox Swedenborgians, and Emerson's view was indeed based on desultory reading and insufficiently thought out.

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But Emerson did at any rate venture upon an interpretation, hazard a view; and the elder Henry James, who equally stood outside the fold, followed with the most audacious and brilliant and, on the whole, satisfying reading of Swedenborg we have yet had.

Brinton is a twentieth-century professor, not a nineteenth-century amateur and devotee. Accordingly, we have full documentation and bibliography. But quotation and paraphrase still constitute an unsatisfactory substitute for interpretation. These are "Prolegomena", useful materials toward the study, rather than real, rich, full-blooded work.

AUSTIN WARREN

ON THE OLD WEST COAST *by Horace Bell* (MORROW. $5.00)

THE late Major Horace Bell's new "Reminiscences of a Ranger", edited from manuscript left unpublished at his death in 1918 by Lanier Bartlett, is in reality a discursive and informal history of the reconstruction period as it affected California, and might very well serve as a case book in examining the effect on morals of the Civil War.

On the surface it has no such serious purpose. It is a volume of the most delightful anecdotes of many an historical occurrence or spectacular personality from the days of the Mexican occupation up to 1901.

As ranger, soldier, lawyer, editor of a prickly little sheet called *The Porcupine*, Major Bell knew California from Siskiyou to San Diego, although his interests centered around Los Angeles, where he fought corrupt officialdom, mob barbarity and Confederate sympathizers who objected to his having been an officer in the Federal Armies.

The book throngs with people known to students of California, from Fra Junipero Serra to Joaquin Murrieta and Stephen Foster, and with events ranging from the "miraculous" formation of Lake Elizabeth to the great Peralta Land Fraud, on which Major Bell throws new light. There is an observer's account of a bull-and-bear baiting and of the early booms in Los Angeles, when oranges strangely grew on joshua trees and Methodist ministers descended from the pulpit to distribute real estate prospectuses to their congregations. Major Bell spares no one. But on the other hand he is fair to those who have been unjustly defamed.

ROBERT L. ROE

UPSTAGE *by John Mason Brown* (NORTON. $3.00)

MR. JOHN MASON BROWN, who is the dramatic critic of the New York *Evening Post*, has written a book full of useful information about the American Theatre as it is here and now. He say "The attempt has been to appraise the so-called 'aesthetic' of the American Theatre (though that is a cumbersome, high-flown and hideous word) in terms of the actual practitioners who have created it or are amplifying it". He brings an extraordinary knowledge of the facts bearing on his subject. He has seen, one gathers, every important production for the last ten or twelve years, and he appears to have read everything about or for the American Theatre since it began. This, however, does not make it any easier to appraise it in terms of itself. Mr. Brown, in fact, is too much a part of the American Theatre to be able to see it in a very illuminating perspective. He knows what the rich New York grandfathers of the present generation saw when they went to the play, but there his perceptions stop: he does not feel the relation between our eclectic provincialism and the great theatres of the past.

This entire concentration on the moment is Mr. Brown's virtue as well as his limitation. He often manages to catch, without comment, the flavor of a Sidney Howard or an Arthur Hopkins. What he does is not so much "place" the men he talks about as describe them. He is not so much a critic as he

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is a short-story writer *manqué*; his material is not his direct vision of the world, but the more or less predigested vision which the artists of the theatre present to him.

This preoccupation with local color, with characterization, perhaps accounts for the exuberant garrulity of his style. At its best this style can deliver us the very feeling of a performance; at its worst it degenerates into a baroque efflorescence of adjectives. His book is to be recommended to those who want a vicarious experience of the stage. But it must be taken in very small doses.

FRANCIS FERGUSSON

TIN PAN ALLEY *by Isaac Goldberg* (JOHN DAY. $3.50)

IN *Tin Pan Alley* Dr. Goldberg turns his complex attention to American popular songs. The result is only occasionally felicitous. Evidence of the precision of academic training is abundant in the knowledge Dr. Goldberg displays of the literature dealing with his subject, and in his arrangement of the materials, including letters and statements from old-time song writers. For the most part, the author's own activities are limited to cutting and pasting and to the quotation, with proper acknowledgment, of such authorities as exist. In particular he draws on the excellent work of James Weldon Johnson, W. C. Handy's anthology, *Blues*, and papers by Aaron Copland and others on the technicalities of jazz.

In bringing together this material the author has undoubtedly performed a service for the amateur of Americana and the history of popular song. Yet one wishes that the historical portions of the book were less sketchy, filled with more information and fewer wisecracks; the style of *Tin Pan Alley* is rather painful. When Dr. Goldberg wishes he can write with excellent good sense. If the entire book were as good as the last two chapters, there would be little complaint. Here the author has to say some of the most intelligent things that have yet been uttered on the subject of jazz and its proper relation to the music of America and the world.

EUGENE ARMFIELD

A STUDY OF RARE BOOKS *by Nolie Mumey, M.A., M.D.* (CLASON. $15.00)

HAD Dr. Mumey's publishers entitled this book "An Aid to the Study of Rare Books" they would not only have come nearer the mark, but would have made an appeal to a large number of people who are not particularly interested in collecting or studying rare books, but who find it necessary, in these days, to know something about them. For the book is not a "study" but a collection of title-pages and other facsimiles, some four hundred altogether, with accompanying text pages, which give the reader a general idea of what rare books are like. There are reproductions of title-pages of incunabula and early printed books, English literature, Colonial and later American literature; colophons and printers' marks and notes on some important book makers, while Part III deals with aids to identification and contains much useful information about Latinized place-names, book terminology, bibliography and other related subjects.

No one should quarrel with an anthologist because of his inclusiveness or exclusiveness. If Dr. Mumey wishes to give what seems to us an undue prominence to early medical works and editions of the Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, that is his privilege. But what he has included is subject to criticism. The publishers recommend this as a guide for students in schools and colleges. Such a guide should be absolutely authoritative, and there are errors in the text of this book which debar its use for such a purpose. It is a little surprising to find herein what purports to be a reproduction of "The Oath of a Free-Man", the first piece of printing in what is now the United States, inasmuch as no copy of the original has ever been found after

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nearly three hundred years of diligent search. The reproduction here is of the Oath as printed in Major John Childs's *New England's Jonas Cast up at London* (London, 1647), where it is stated to be from the original. While the original probably looked much like the reproduction here given at second-hand it must be regarded as a "ghost-book", or merely a type facsimile.

The notes, placed on pages opposite the facsimiles, are of varying length and completeness. The statement that there are eight copies of the *Bay Psalm Book* is surprising, as Ford some years ago described all the known copies, which number ten. Nor can we accept as authoritative the statements regarding the "points" of the first issues of the first editions of *Robinson Crusoe* and *The Vicar of Wakefield*, as the ablest bibliographers of these works do not accept them as proof. It is natural to include here several title-pages of the later American literature which is now so much collected as "modern firsts", and here are not only the early authors like Bryant, Irving and Cooper, and the New England group, but the modern writers like Garland, Crane, Norris, Bierce, Wister, Dreiser, Cabell, Masters, Morley, Millay, Cather and Robinson.

Nevertheless, the facsimiles speak for themselves, and the reproductions are excellent. While the book may not be all its publishers claim for it—what book is?—it is well designed to give one familiarity with the appearance of rare books in general, and of some of the reproductions those here given are the only ones available to the student. It contains much valuable general information, and a bibliography which will be very useful to the student who wishes to go further.

GEORGE H. SARGENT

PROCESSION OF THE GODS *by Gaius Glenn Atkins* (SMITH. $3.50)

STARTING with what he calls the "faiths of the dark and the dawn", Dr. Atkins has traced his "procession of the gods" from the earliest known anthropomorphic conjecture to the present-day status of Christianity. He has described and interpreted the "sphinx-guarded gods of the Nile", the religions of Babylon and Nineveh, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, paganism, Mohammedanism, Judaism, Catholicism, Protestantism. He is sympathetic to every faith that he discusses, and he is a scholar. In most cases, though frequently compelled to use translations, he has gone to original sources. Moreover, he has read not only such men as Frazer, Rhys-Davids, and Jastrow, but Freud and Whitehead. His book is an attempt to boil down his knowledge and love of the world's religions and to make a stew that will be tempting to the general reader. For seasoning he has sprinkled his stew freely with poetic phrases which are designed to give to his subject the flavor of mystery. Thus, to take two examples at random, Zoroastrianism is referred to as the "religion of embattled light and darkness", while the Semitic people become "the children of the tent of hair". More than once the seasoning becomes a trifle too sweet for almost any one's taste.

On the whole, however, *Procession of the Gods* is to be preferred, as more conscientious and more attractive in spirit, to the usual "story" of religion. But it is a question whether the general reader will not find its information too deeply buried beneath the veils of a post-transcendentalist style.

GERALD SYKES

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FLEDGLING FICTION

WINTER HARVEST

Now the publishing season draws to a close and the stream of fiction thins preparatory to ceasing entirely for a few weeks. Before me, as I write, are eleven volumes, the last, I take it, of the year's crop of first novels. A bumper crop, to judge from my records. In these pages, since August, I have commented on no less than forty-four first books of fiction; the present group will bring the total to fifty-five. This in a year of depression, of publishing caution. This not counting the mystery stories or the adventure yarns which do not fall into my hands. Never again let any person say that the new writer cannot secure a hearing. In sober fact, I am aghast at the hospitality displayed by almost all publishers toward new writers: at the hardihood they evince in investing considerable time and not inconsiderable sums in the publication of books which have been accepted solely because of a belief in their merits.

I am not, I hope, being Pollyannaish. I am not picturing the members of the publishing fraternity as a group of large-hearted gentlemen playing philanthropist among the unpublished. But I do maintain that they, far more than any other group of men who deal in the products of brains, honor the debt which they owe to their profession to seek out new talent and give it a hearing.

Indeed they honor it too well. I have, during this month and throughout the year, encountered books which, judged as entertainment or by any other standard, have seemed to me wholly unworthy of existence. I have read others of negligible worth in the main which displayed just that misleading glimmer of promise that so often paralyzes the editorial judgment and eventually lures the cigar stores into the bargain book business. But there have been a few which would deserve an honorable place among the better books of any season. Two such books lie before me now.

Let me speak first of *Midsummernight* by Carl Wilhelmson (Farrar & Rinehart. $2.50), for it is a book which has given me a rare degree of pleasure. Here, told with a simplicity which harbors a finished art, is a story of people so remote from ourselves in customs and in their habit of thought that their unfamiliarity lends an added delight to the tale. It is of his native Finland that Mr. Wilhelmson writes: of a people given to primitive ceremonies and rude displays of courage—wedding feasts which last for days, finger-pulling contests and other tests of endurance which smack of the Middle Ages.

It is on "midsummernight" that the story opens, a night when, according to custom, the young men, appropriately dressed, visit the girls in the milksheds of the countryside and lie with them till dawn in innocent talk. To one of these sheds comes Otto Maki, the returned wanderer, who was stolen from his home when a boy of ten and has roamed over the world since that time. Now he is home once more and somewhat contemptuous of his fellow countrymen. But the shed to which he comes is tenanted by Aino, the shoemaker's daughter; and in the speech they hold together and in her singing there is a magic which binds him to his home again. Yet it is Otto's cousin Esko whom the girl loves.

It is no conventional village drama of love and jealousy that the novel tells. Instead the author plunges into the recesses of Otto's mind, showing him warped by his infatua-

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tion, spiritually estranged from his people and yet held to them by the very experiences which embitter him. And as a background to his emotional drama is the rich tapestry of the life about him—a life of barbaric crudeness, but of dignity and beauty as well, above all of immense heartiness.

This heartiness, this gusto, stand out above all other qualities in the book. Indeed there is about it at moments some of the wild gaiety that is in the wedding scenes in *Peer Gynt*; some of the large unrestraint of *Gösta Berling*. Here too, as in those masterpieces, one enters a world of more intense passions than ours: a world touched with madness, yet somehow magnificent.

So wholly different from *Midsummernight*, so completely divorced in manner and in spirit, is Miss F. M. Mayor's *The Rector's Daughter* (Coward-McCann. $1.50) that I hesitate to associate the two even in the bonds of print. This, too, is a fine achievement: a book so thoughtfully executed, so expert in its treatment of a complex character that I have an uneasy fear that it cannot be a first novel. It begins unpromisingly with what appears to be a too-compressed account of the early years of Mary Jocelyn, the repressed daughter of the aloof and scholarly Canon. Suddenly it grows more leisured and more detailed, and Mary emerges, a figure oddly alive, whose thwarted and uneventful history becomes with each page more momentous. Miss Mayor understands the trick (which is so much more than a trick) of imparting value to minor incidents. She employs the drama in other people's lives to quicken the life of her heroine. And without indulging in an elaborate analysis of Mary's emotions, she manages to communicate them to the reader in telling fashion. Mary's love for Herbert, her literary ambitions and her frustrated adoration of her father are real and moving.

Miss Mayor's success in making ordinary events dramatic, points very emphatically to the failure of Mr. J. Keith Winter to make melodramatic happenings effective. I am aware that this is heresy. In England his novel, *Other Man's Saucer* (Doubleday, Doran. $2.50), has been heralded by a chorus of angels consisting of Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith and Messrs. J. B. Priestley, Hugh Walpole and Harold Nicolson, and by them variously pronounced "the most remarkable first novel of the year", "doomed to remarkable success . . . a rare achievement", and the like. Hmmm! I wonder! Mr. Winter has a decided talent for dialogue and he manages his narrative well. He has, as Miss Kaye-Smith points out, sincerity—that dreadful green sincerity of extreme youth, which postures and attitudinizes and blurts out half-truths and never by any chance is capable of faithful reporting or accurate observation: that sincerity which in this grotesque and extravagant form is the greatest single handicap an artist can possess. But instead of the power of which his admirers speak, I see only crude violence, instead of a love of beauty I detect only the yearnings of the immature esthete, and as for beauty in the novel itself, I discover it in one scene only—that of the death of the beloved brother Mac.

The theme is excellent; it is, in brief, the story of a boy who, as the result of three violent shocks during adolescence, develops a passionate and neurotic self-sufficiency which compels him to sacrifice every person with whom he comes into contact to his own self-interests. Thus at Oxford he tyrannizes over his closest friend, leading him into dissipations and almost into serious trouble, taking his sweetheart away, and rather lightly dismissing her after a few days of cloying love-making. He later enters upon a new and stronger (and even more pathological) friendship, and here, finding his self-sufficiency threatened, he attempts first quarreling and eventually murder as a release. The book ends in midair with a hint that the hero's return to a normal state of mind is imminent.

All this would be very well if it were credible, but the theatricality with which every

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incident is invested robs it of verisimilitude. I find it difficult to accept Shaw Latimer himself; more difficult to accept his vagaries. Mr. Winter's failure to justify the emotional structure of his novel makes it not only ineffective but a trifle ludicrous.

Another treatment of the theme of the shocked idealist who runs amok is to be found in *Through Traffic* by Russell Davenport (Doubleday, Doran. $1.00). This, a much less ambitious book than *Other Man's Saucer*, more nearly achieves its aim. The author has set out to write a melodrama of high finance. Barring a certain mistiness in his principal character, he has succeeded.

Gerald W. Johnson's *By Reason of Strength* (Minton, Balch. $2.00) carries a Southern family through the generations from the Revolutionary period on. A single figure dominates the scene: that of Catharine Whyte, the indomitable Grandma, who came from Scotland with her preacher husband, hating the alien soil of North Carolina, but giving it so much of her spirit that in the end she knew it for her own country. Mr. Johnson has made a noble figure of the old woman; he draws her with an affection such as one lavishes upon an actual character. That affection is at once a source of strength and of weakness; for if the woman gains by it, the book loses in richness. It is more like a short biography than a novel—as if some factual knowledge had stayed the author's hand from lavishing too much detail upon the background. But as the biography of an imagined person it possesses tenderness and dignity and it conjures up a picture that is not without beauty.

Another novel of an older America is *Gospel Four Corners* by Frances Gilchrist Wood (Appleton. $2.00), the story of a reformer and newspaper editor of the seventies, which, although smoothly and even pleasantly written, lacks the authentic qualities of drama.

A peculiarly persistent egotism is the dominant note in *A River Goes with Heaven* by Howell Vines (Little, Brown. $2.00), the story, told in the first person, of a summer spent on the Warrior Rivers in Alabama. The narrator records the trivia of his existence; his conversations, his goings and comings, his meals, and his courtship of a lady named Halma, whose chief characteristic is her devotion to her lover. It is really an achievement to maintain throughout nearly three hundred pages so unrelieved a concentration upon self. Even his observations of nature are transmitted to us through the medium of the narrator's emotions. The river which he loves, the redbird he studies, only exist as they affect him. As for Halma—

> She had said, "You're the only one who has ever courted at this place except those who courted my sisters. And you're the only one who shall. There's none else beside you—and there's none like you. . . . None like you on earth. . . . None beside you".
>
> She's beautiful . . . yes . . . beautiful as the two Warriors . . . and as good as the two Warriors. Yes, that's just it. I've thought it all out and that's the way it is.

Young ladies who come to New York to follow careers and live their own lives are discussed in two books: *Via Manhattan* by Hawthorne Hurst (King. $1.50) and *Rebecca the Wise* by Joseph Israels (Doubleday, Doran. $1.00). The former is obvious claptrap of the type which finds its way into the confession magazines. The latter is a hurried sketch for a novel rather than a finished book. Both can be dispensed with.

Mr. Charles Morrow Wilson has written in *Acres of Sky* (Putnam. $2.00) a slender story of the Arkansas hill-country, which contains some excellent pictures of life in that region but is marred by an excessively poetic style and by a general air of unreality. . . . *River Man* by Leonard Lupton (Dial Press. $2.00) is another over-romantic story of a man afflicted with wanderlust and one of those Dream-Women who are often to be found in fiction. They live on shanty-boats up the Hudson River.

GUY HOLT

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THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE, LIFE MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, IN COÖPERATION WITH THE PUBLIC LIBRARIES OF AMERICA

Nine new titles this month; signifying that the library readers of the nation have settled down to a winter of serious reading of the new offerings. Five novels not previously heard of in these lists and four general works; and every one of them will keep on appearing in this Monthly Score for months or perhaps years to come. That, at least, has been the past history of books making their first appearance at this season. Did you notice that Temple Bailey's new novel jumps from nowhere to the top of the list? That is one of the things that don't often happen; and it only happens when the author has succeeded in telling a good story. As your reporter has so frequently remarked before, all you need to do to get a place in this literary sun is to tell a good story. It's as simple as that.

—F. P. S.

NOVELS

1.	WILD WIND*	*Temple Bailey*	PENN
2.	LAUGHING BOY	*Oliver La Farge*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
3.	CIMARRON	*Edna Ferber*	DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
4.	ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT	*Erich Maria Remarque*	LITTLE, BROWN
5.	YEARS OF GRACE*	*Margaret Ayer Barnes*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
6.	MARGARET YORK	*Kathleen Norris*	DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
7.	SEED*	*Charles G. Norris*	DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
8.	THE SCARAB MURDER CASE	*S. S. Van Dine*	SCRIBNER'S
9.	EXILE	*Warwick Deeping*	KNOPF
10.	CHANCES	*A. Hamilton Gibbs*	LITTLE, BROWN
11.	EXIT*	*Harold Bell Wright*	APPLETON
12.	ANGEL PAVEMENT*	*J. B. Priestley*	HARPERS

GENERAL

1.	THE GREEN PASTURES	*Marc Connelly*	FARRAR & RINEHART
2.	BYRON	*André Maurois*	APPLETON
3.	THE STORY OF SAN MICHELE*	*Axel Munthe*	DUTTON
4.	THE ADAMS FAMILY	*James Truslow Adams*	LITTLE, BROWN
5.	THE HUMAN MIND	*Karl Menninger*	KNOPF
6.	NEW WORLDS TO CONQUER	*Richard Halliburton*	BOBBS-MERRILL
7.	ROOSEVELT*	*Owen Wister*	MACMILLAN
8.	LONE COWBOY*	*Will James*	SCRIBNER'S
9.	ASTROLOGY*	*Evangeline Adams*	DODD, MEAD
10.	A TREATISE ON THE GODS	*H. L. Mencken*	KNOPF
11.	THE MEANING OF CULTURE	*John Cowper Powys*	NORTON
12.	THE ART OF THINKING	*Ernest Dimnet*	SIMON & SCHUSTER

* This title has not previously appeared in the Monthly Score.

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